THE ADVENTURES OF HARRY RICHMOND

GEORGE MEREDITH

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BY

GEORGE MEREDITH.

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THE ADVENTURES

OF

HARRY RICHMOND.

CHAPTER I.

CONCLUSION OF THE BATH EPISODE.

The friends of Miss Penrhys were ill advised in trying to cry down a man like my father. Active persecution was the breath of life to him. When untroubled he was apt to let both his ambition and his dignity slumber. The squibs and scandal set afloat concerning him armed his wit, nerved his temper, touched him with the spirit of enterprise; he became a new creature. I lost sight of certain characteristics which I had begun to ponder over critically. I believed with all my heart that circumstances were blameable for much that did not quite please me. Upon the question of his magnanimity, as well as of his courage, there could not be

two opinions. He would neither retort nor defend himself. I perceived some grandeur in his conduct, without, however, appreciating it cordially, as I did a refinement of discretion about him that kept him from brushing good taste while launched in ostentatious displays. He had a fine tact and a keen intuition. He may have thought it necessary to throw a little dust in my eyes; but I doubt his having done it, for he had only, as he knew, to make me jealous to blind me to his faults utterly, and he refrained. In his allusions to the young lady he was apologetic, affectionate; one might have fancied oneself listening to a gracious judge who had well weighed her case, and exculpated her from other excesses than that of a generous folly. Captain DeWitt, a competent critic, pronounced his behaviour consummate at all points. For my behoof, he hinted antecedent reverses to the picture; meditating upon which, I traced them to the fatal want of money, and that I might be able to fortify him in case of need, I took my own counsel, and wrote to my aunt for the loan of as large a sum as she could afford to send. Her eagerness for news of our doings was insatiable. "You do not describe her," she replied, not naming Miss Penrhys; and again, "I can form no image of her. Your accounts of her are confusing. earnestly, do you like her? She must be very wilful, but is she really nice? I want to know how she appears to my Harry's mind."

My father borrowed these letters, and returning

them to me, said, "A good soul! the best of women! There—there is a treasure lost!" His forehead was clouded in speaking. He recommended me to assure my aunt that she would never have to take a family interest in Miss Penrhys. But this was not deemed perfectly satisfactory at Riversley. My aunt wrote: "Am I to understand that you, Harry, raise objections to her? Think first whether she is in herself objectionable. She is rich, she may be prudent, she may be a forethoughtful person. She may not be able to support a bitter shock of grief. She may be one who can help. She may not be one whose heart will bear it. Put your own feelings aside, my dearest. Our duties cannot ever be clear to us until we do. It is possible for headstrong wilfulness and secret tenderness to go Think whether she is capable of sacrifice together. before you compel her to it. Do not inflict misery wantonly. One would like to see her. Harry, I brood on your future; that is why I seem to you preternaturally anxious about you."

She seemed to me preternaturally anxious about Miss Penrhys.

My father listened in silence to my flippant satire on women's letters.

He answered after a pause,-

"Our Jorian says that women's letters must be read like anagrams. To put it familiarly, they are like a child's field of hop-scotch. You may have noticed the urchins at their game: a bit of tile, and a variety of compartments to pass it through to the base, hopping. Or no, Richie, pooh! 'tis an unworthy comparison, this hop-scotch. I mean, laddie, they write in zigzags; and so will you when your heart trumpets in your ear. Tell her, tell that dear noble good woman—say, we are happy, you and I, and alone, and shall be; and do me the favour—she loves you, my son—address her sometimes—she has been it—call her 'mother;' she will like it; she deserves—nothing shall supplant her!"

He lost his voice.

She sent me three hundred pounds; she must have supposed the occasion pressing. Thus fortified against paternal improvidence, I expended a hundred in the purchase of a horse, and staked the remainder on him in a match, and was beaten. Disgusted with the horse, I sold him for half his purchase-money, and with that sum paid a bill to maintain my father's credit in the town. Figuratively speaking, I looked at my hands as astonished as I had been when the poor little rascal in the street snatched my cake, and gave me the vision of him gorging it in the flurried alley of the London crowd.

"Money goes," I remarked.

"That is the general experience of the nature of money," said my father, freshly; "but nevertheless you will be surprised to find how extraordinarily few are the people to make allowance for particular cases. It plays the trick with everybody, and almost nobody lets it stand as a plea for the individual. Here is Jorian,

and you, my son, and perhaps your aunt Dorothy, and upon my word, I think I have numbered all I know—or, ay, Sukey Sampleman, I should not omit her in an honourable list—and that makes positively all I know who would commiserate a man touched on the shoulder by a sheriff's officer—not that such an indignity is any longer done to me."

"I hope we have seen the last of Shylock's great-grand-nephew," said I, emphatically.

"Merely to give you the instance, Richie. Ay! I hope so, I hope so! But it is the nature of money that you never can tell if the boarding's sound, once be dependent upon it. But this is talk for tradesmen."

Thinking it so myself, I had not attempted to discover the source of my father's income. Such as it was, it was paid half-yearly, and spent within a month of the receipt, for the most signal proof possible of its shameful insufficiency. Thus ten months of the year at least he lived protesting, and many with him, compulsorily. For two months he was a brilliant man. I penetrated his mystery enough to abstain from questioning him, and enough to determine that on my coming of age he should cease to be a pensioner, petitioner, and adventurer. He aimed at a manifest absurdity.

In the meantime, after the lesson I had received as to the nature of money, I saw with some alarm my father preparing to dig a great pit for it. He had no doubt performed wonders. Despite of scandal and tattle, and the deadly report of a penniless fortune-

hunter having fascinated the young heiress, he commanded an entrance to the receptions of both the rival ladies dominant. These ladies, Lady Wilts and Lady Denewdney, who moved each in her select half-circle, and could heretofore be induced by none to meet in a common centre, had pledged themselves to honour with their presence a ball he proposed to give to the choice world here assembled on a certain illuminated day of the calendar.

"So I have now possession of Bath, Richie," said he, twinkling to propitiate me, lest I should suspect him of valuing his achievements highly. He had, he continued, promised Hickson of the Fourth Estate, that he would, before leaving the place, do his utmost to revive the ancient glories of Bath: Bath had once set the fashion to the kingdom; why not again? I might have asked him, why at all, or why at his expense; but his lead was irresistible. Captain DeWitt and his valet, and I, and a score of ladies, scores of tradesmen, were rushing, reluctant or not, on a torrent. My part was to show that I was an athlete, and primarily that I could fence and shoot. "It will do no harm to let it be known," said DeWitt. He sat writing letters inces-My father made the tour of his fair stewardesses santly. from noon to three, after receiving in audience his jewellers, linendrapers, carpenters, confectioners, from nine in the morning till twelve. At three o'clock business ceased. Workmen then applying to him for instructions were despatched to the bar of the hotel, bearing the recommendation to the barmaid not to supply them refreshment if they had ever in their lives been seen drunk. At four he dressed for afternoon parade. Nor could his enemy have said that he was not the chief voice and eye along his line of march. His tall full figure maintained a superior air without insolence, and there was a leaping beam in his large blue eyes, together with the signification of movement coming to his kindly lips, such as hardly ever failed to waken smiles of greeting. People smiled and bowed, and forgot their curiosity, forgot even to be critical, while he was in sight. I can say this, for I was acutely critical of their bearing towards him; the atmosphere of the place was never perfectly pleasing to me. My attitude of watchful reserve, and my reputation as the heir of immense wealth, tended possibly to constrain a certain number of the inimical party to be ostensibly civil. Lady Wilts, who did me the honour to patronize me almost warmly, complimented me on my manner of backing him, as if I were the hero; but I felt his peculiar charm; she partly admitted it, making a whimsical mouth, saying, in allusion to Miss Penrhys, "I, you know, am past twenty. At twenty forty is charming; at forty twenty." Where I served him perhaps was in showing my resolution to protect him: he had been insulted before my arrival. The male relatives of Miss Penrhys did not repeat the insult: they went to Lady Wilts and groaned over their hard luck in not having the option of fighting me. I was, in her phrase, a new piece on the board, and

checked them. Thus, if they provoked a challenge from me, they brought the destructive odour of powder. about the headstrong creature's name. Previously they had reckoned on my father for sparing her, and had done as they liked. I was therefore of use to him so I leaned indolently across the rails of the promenade while she bent and chattered in his ear, and her attendant cousin and cavalier, Mervyn Penrhys, chewed vexation in the form of a young mustachio's curl. horse fretted; he murmured deep notes, and his look was savage; but he was bound to wait on her, and she would not go until it suited her pleasure. She introduced him to me—as if conversation could be carried on between two young men feeling themselves simply pieces on the board, one giving check, and the other chafing under it! I need not say that I disliked my situation. It was worse when my father took to bowing to her from a distance, unobservant of her hand's prompt pull at the reins as soon as she saw him. Lady Wilts had assumed the right of a woman still possessing attractions to exert her influence with him on behalf of the family, for I had done my best to convince her that he entertained no serious thought of marrying, and decidedly would not marry without my approval. He acted on her advice to discourage the wilful girl.

"How is it I am so hateful to you?" Miss Penrhys accosted me abruptly. I fancied she must have gone mad, and an interrogative frown was my sole answer.

"Oh! I hear that you pronounce me everywhere unendurable," she continued. "You are young, and you misjudge me in some way, and I should be glad if you knew me better. By-and-by, in Wales.—Are you fond of mountain scenery? We might be good friends; my temper is not bad—at least, I hope not. Heaven knows what one's relatives think of one! Will you visit us? I hear you have promised your confidante, Lady Wilts."

My reply to this attack was mixed up with the broad vowels of eloquent discomposure:

"Really, Miss Penrhys, you are under a delusion; I shall be happy; I like the mountains, I——"

"No delusion at all. But will you wait before you form a positive opinion of me?"

"I can't, for I've formed it already, and it's exactly the reverse of what you seem to have heard."

"Who calls you shy!" she returned, leaving me, dissatisfied, I was sure.

At a dancing party where we met, she was thrown on my hands by her ungovernable vehemence, and I, as I had told Lady Wilts, not being able to understand the liking of twenty for forty (fifty would have been nearer the actual mark, or sixty), offered her no lively sympathy. I believe she had requested my father to pay public court to her. If Captain DeWitt was to be trusted, she desired him to dance, and dance with her exclusively, and so confirm and defy the tattle of the town; but my father hovered between the dowagers.

She in consequence declined to dance, which was the next worst thing she could do. An aunt, a miserable woman, was on her left; on her right she contrived, too frequently for my peace of mind, to reserve a vacant place for me, and she eved me intently across the room, under her persistent brows, until perforce I was drawn to her side. I had to listen to a repetition of sharp queries and replies, and affect a flattered gaiety, feeling myself most uncomfortably, as Captain DeWitt (who watched us) said, Chip the son of Block the father. By fixing the son beside her, she defeated the father's scheme of coldness, and made it appear a concerted piece of policy. Even I saw that. I saw more than I grasped. Love for my father was to my mind a natural thing, a proof of taste and goodness; women might love him; but the love of a young girl with the morning's mystery about her! and for my progenitor! -a girl (as I reflected in the midst of my interjections) well-built, clear-eyed, animated, clever, with soft white hands and pretty feet; how could it be? She was sombre as a sunken fire until he at last came round to her, and then her sudden vivacity was surprising.

Affairs were no further advanced when I had to obey the squire's commands and return to Riversley, missing the night of the grand ball with no profound regret, except for my father's sake. He wrote soon after one of his characteristic letters, to tell me that the ball had been a success. Immediately upon this announcement, he indulged luxurious reflections, as his manner was:—

"To have stirred up the old place and given it something to dream of for the next half century, is a satisfaction, Richie, I have a kindness for Bath, I leave it with its factions reconciled, its tea-tables furnished with inexhaustible supplies of the chief thing necessary, and the persuasion firmly established in my own bosom that it is impossible to revive the past, so we must march with the age. And let me add, all but every one of the bills happily discharged, to please you. Prav. fag at your German. If (as I myself confess to) you have enjoyment of old ways, habits, customs, and ceremonies, look to Court life. It is only in Courts that a man mav now air a leg; and there the women are works of art. If you are deficient in calves (which my boy, thank heaven! will never be charged with) you are there found out, and in fact every deficiency, every qualification, is at once in patent exhibition at a Court. I fancy Parliament for you still, and that is no impediment as a step. Jorian would have you sit and wallow in ease, and buy (by the way, we might think of it) a famous Burgundy vineyard (for an investment), devote the prime of your life to the discovery of a cook, your manhood to perfect the creature's education—so forth; I imagine you are to get five years of ample gratification (a promise hardly to be relied on) in the sere leaf, and so perish. Take poor Jorian for an example of what the absence of ambition brings men to. I treasure Jorian, I hoard the poor fellow, to have him for a lesson to my boy. Witty and shrewd, and a masterly tactician (I wager he would have won his spurs on the field of battle), you see him now living for one hour of the day—absolutely twenty-three hours of the man's life are chained slaves, beasts of burden, to the four-and-twentieth! So, I repeat, fag at your German.

"Miss Penrhys retires to her native Wales: Jorian and I on to London, to the continent. Plinlimmon guard us all! I send you our local newspapers. I cut entrechats is false. It happens to be a thing I could do, and not an Englishman in England except myself; only I did not do it. I did appear in what I was educated to believe was the evening suit of a gentleman, and I cannot perceive the immodesty of showing my leg. A dress that is not indecent, and is becoming to me, and is the dress of my fathers, I wear, and I impose it on the generation of my sex. However, I dined Hickson of the Fourth Estate (Jorian considers him hungry enough to eat up his twentieth before he dies-I forget the wording of the mot), that he might know I was without rancour in the end, as originally I had been without any intention of purchasing his allegiance. He offered me his columns; he wished me luck with the heiress; by his gods, he swore he worshipped entrechats, and held a silk leg the most admirable work of the manufactures. 'Sir, you're a gentleman,' says he; 'you're a nobleman, sir; you're a prince; you're a star of the first magnitude.' Cries Jorian, 'Retract that, scum! you see nothing large but what you dare to think neighbours you,' and quarrels the inebriate dog. And this is the maker and destroyer of reputations in his day! I study Hickson as a miraculous engine of the very simplest contrivance; he is himself the epitome of a verdict on his period. Next day he disclaimed in his opposition penny sheet the report of the entrechats, and 'the spectators laughing consumedly,' and sent me (as I had requested him to do) the names of his daughters, to whom I transmit little comforting presents, for if they are nice children such a parent must afflict them.

"Cultivate Lady Wilts. You have made an impression. She puts you forward as a good specimen of our young men. 'Hem! madam.

"But, my dear boy, as I said, we cannot revive the past. I acknowledge it. Bath rebukes my last fit of ambition, and the experience is very well worth the expense. You have a mind, Richie, for discussing outlay, upon which I congratulate you, so long as you do not overlook equivalents. The system of the world is barter varied by robbery. Show that you have something in hand, and you enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that you were not robbed. I pledge you my word to it—I shall not repeat Bath. And mark you, an heiress is never compromised. I am not, I hope, responsible for every creature caught up in my circle of attraction. Believe me, dear boy, I should consult you, and another one, estimable beyond mortal speech! if I

had become involved—impossible! No; I am free of all fresh chains, because of the old ones. Years will not be sufficient for us when you and I once begin to talk in earnest, when I open! To resume—so I leave Bath with a light conscience. Mixed with pleasant recollections is the transient regret that you were not a spectator of the meeting of the Wilts and Denewdney streams. Jorian compared them to the Rhone and the-I forget the name of the river below Genevadirtyish; for there was a transparent difference in the Denewdney style of dress, and did I choose it I could sit and rule those two factions as despotically as Buonaparte his Frenchmen. Ask me what I mean by scaling billows, Richie. I will some day tell you. I have done it all my life, and here I am. But I thank heaven I have a son I love, and I can match him against the best on earth, and henceforward I live for him, to vindicate and right the boy, and place him in his legitimate sphere. From this time I take to looking exclusively forward, and I labour diligently. I have energies.

"Not to boast, darling old son, I tell truth; I am only happy when my heart is beating near you. Here comes the mother in me pumping up. Adieu. Lebe wohl. The German!—the German!—may God in his Barmherzigkeit!—Tell her I never encouraged the girl, have literally nothing to trace a temporary wrinkle on my forehead as regards conscience. I say, may it please Providence to make you a good German scholar

by the day of your majority. Hurrah for it! Present my humble, warm respects to your aunt Dorothy. I pray to heaven nightly for one of its angels on earth. Kunst, Wissenschaft, Ehre, Liebe. Die Liebe. Quick at the German poets. Frau: Fräulein. I am actually dazzled at the prospect of our future. To be candid, I no longer see to write. Grüss' dich herzlich. From Vienna to you next. Lebe wohl!"

My aunt Dorothy sent a glance at the letter while I was folding it, evidently thinking my unwillingness to offer it a sign of bad news or fresh complications. She spoke of Miss Penrhys.

"Oh! that's over," said I. "Heiresses soon get consoled."

She accused me of having picked up a vulgar idea. I maintained that it was my father's.

"It cannot be your father's," said she softly; and on affirming that he had uttered it and written it, she replied in the same tone, more effective than the ordinary language of conviction, "He does not think it."

The rage of a youth to prove himself in the right of an argument was insufficient to make me lay the letter out before other eyes than my own, and I shrank from exposing it to compassionate gentle eyes that would have pleaded similar allowances to mine for the wildness of the style. I should have thanked, but despised the intelligence of one who framed my excuses for my father, just as the squire, by abusing him, would have made me a desperate partisan in a minute. The vitality of the delusion I cherished was therefore partly extinct; not so the love; yet the love of him could no longer shake itself free from oppressive shadows.

Out of his circle of attraction books were my resource.

CHAPTER II.

MY TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

Books and dreams, like the two rivers cited by my father, flowed side by side in me without mixing; and which the bright Rhone was, which the brown Arve, needs not to be told to those who know anything of youth; they were destined to intermingle soon enough. I read well, for I felt ground and had mounting views; the real world, and the mind and passions of the world, grew visible to me. My tutor pleased the squire immensely by calling me matter-of-fact. In philosophy and history I hated speculation; but nothing was too fantastic for my ideas of possible occurrences. Once away from books. I carried a head that shot rockets to the farthest hills. My dear friend Temple was at sea, or I should have had one near me to detect and control the springs of nonsense. I was deemed a remarkably quiet sober thoughtful young man, acquiescent in all schemes projected for my welfare. The squire would have liked to see me courting the girl of his heart, as he termed Janet Ilchester, a little more demonstratively. We 22 VOL. II.

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had, however, come to the understanding that I was to travel before settling. Traditional notions of the importance of the Grand Tour in the education of gentlemen led him to consent to my taking a year on the continent accompanied by my tutor. He wanted some one, he said, to represent him when I was out over there; which signified that he wanted some one to keep my father in check; but as the Rev. Ambrose Peterborough, successor to the Rev. Simon Hart, was hazy and manageable, I did not object. Such faith had the quiet thoughtful young man at Riversley in the convulsions of the future, the whirlwinds and whirlpools spinning for him and all connected with him, that he did not object to hear his name and Janet's coupled, though he had not a spark of love for her. I tried to realize to myself the general opinion that she was handsome. Her evebrows were thick and level and long; her eyes direct in their gaze, of a flinty blue, with dark lashes; her nose firm, her lips fullish, and firm when joined; her shape straight, moderately flexible. But she had no softness; she could admire herself in my presence; she claimed possession of me openly, and at the same time openly provoked a siege from the remainder of my sex; she was not maidenly. She caught imagination by the sleeve, and shut it between square whitewashed walls. Heriot thought her not only handsome, but comparable to Mrs. William Bulsted, our Julia Rippenger of old. At his meeting with Julia, her delicious loss of colour made her seem to me one of the loveliest women

on earth. Janet never lost colour, rarely blushed; she touched neither nerve nor fancy.

"You want a rousing coquette," said Heriot; "you won't be happy till you've been racked by that nice instrument of torture, and the fair Bulsted will do it for you if you like. You don't want a snake or a common serpent, you want a Python."

I wanted bloom and mystery, a woman shifting like the light, with evening and night and dawn, and sudden fire. Janet was bald to the heart inhabiting me then, as if quite shaven. She could speak her affectionate mind as plain as print, and it was dull print facing me, not the arches of the sunset. Julia had only to lisp, "my husband," to startle and agitate me beyond expression. She said simple things-"I slept well last night," or "I dreamed," or "I shivered," and plunged me headlong down impenetrable forests. The mould of her mouth to a reluctant "No," and her almost invariable drawing in of her breath with a "Yes." surcharged the every-day monosyllables with meanings of life and death. At last I was reduced to tell her, seeing that she reproached my coldness for Janet, how much I wished Janet resembled her. Her Irish eyes lightened: "Me! Harry;" then they shadowed: "She is worth ten of me." Such pathetic humility tempted me to exalt her supremely. I talked like a boy, feeling like a man: she behaved like a woman, blushing like a girl.

"Julia! I can never call you Mrs. Bulsted."

"You have an affection for my husband, have you not, Harry?"

Of a season when this was adorable language to me, the indication is sufficient. Riding out perfectly crazed by it, I met Kiomi, and transferred my emotions. The squire had paid her people an annual sum to keep away from our neighbourhood, while there was a chance of my taking to gipsy life. They had come back to their old camping-ground, rather dissatisfied with the squire.

"Speak to him yourself, Kiomi," said I; "whatever you ask for, he can't refuse anything to such eyes as yours."

"You!" she rallied me; "why can't you talk sensible stuff!"

She had grown a superb savage, proof against weather and compliments. Her face was like an Egyptian sky fronting night. The strong old Eastern blood put ruddy flame for the red colour; tawny olive edged from the red; rare vivid yellow, all but amber. The light that first looks down upon the fallen sun was her complexion above the brows, and round the cheeks, the neck's nape, the throat, and the firm bosom prompt to lift and sink with her vigour of speech, as her eyes were to flash and darken. Meeting her you swore she was the personification of wandering Asia. There was no question of beauty and grace, for these have laws. The curve of her brows broke like a beaten wave; the lips and nostrils were wide, tragic in repose. But when she

laughed she illuminated you; where she stepped she made the earth hers. She was as fresh of her East as the morning when her ancient people struck tents in the track of their shadows. I write of her in the style consonant to my ideas of her at the time. I would have carried her off on the impulse and lived her life, merely to have had such a picture moving in my sight, and call it mine.

- "You're not married?" I said, ludicrously faintly.
- "I've not seen the man I'd marry," she answered, grinning scorn.

The prize-fighter had adopted drinking for his pursuit; one of her aunts was dead, and she was in quest of money to bury the dead woman with the conventional ceremonies and shows of respect dear to the hearts of gipsies, whose sense of propriety and adherence to customs are a sentiment indulged by them to a degree unknown to the stabled classes. In fact, they have no other which does not come under the definite title of pride; -pride in their physical prowess, their dexterity, ingenuity, and tricksiness, and their purity of blood. Kiomi confessed she had hoped to meet me; confessed next that she had been waiting to jump out on me; and next that she had sat in a tree watching the Grange yesterday for six hours; and all for money to do honour to her dead relative, poor little soul! Heriot and I joined the decent procession to the grave. Her people had some quarrel with the Durstan villagers, and she feared the scandal of being pelted on the way to the church. I knew that nothing of the sort would happen if I was present. Kiomi walked humbly, with her head bent, leaving me the thick rippling coarse black locks of her hair for a mark of observation. We were entertained at her camp in the afternoon. I saw no sign of intelligence between her and Heriot. On my asking her, the day before, if she remembered him, she said, "I do, I'm dangerous for that young man." Heriot's comment on her was impressed on me by his choosing to call her "a fine doe leopard," and maintaining that it was a defensible phrase.

She was swept from my amorous mind by Mabel Sweetwinter, the miller's daughter of Dipwell. This was a Saxon beauty in full bud, yellow as mid-May, with the eyes of opening June. Beauty, you will say, is easily painted in that style. But the sort of beauty suits the style, and the well-worn comparisons express the well-known type. Beside Kiomi she was like a rich meadow on the border of the heaths.

We saw them together on my twenty-first birthday. To my shame I awoke in the early morning at Riversley, forgetful of my father's old appointment for the great Dipwell feast. Not long after sunrise, when blackbirds peck the lawns, and swallows are out from under eaves to the flood's face, I was hailed by Janet Ilchester beneath my open windows. I knew she had a bet with the squire that she would be the first to hail me legal man, and was prepared for it. She sat on horseback alone in the hazy dewy midsummer morning, giving

clear note: "Whoop! Harry Richmond! halloo!" To which I tossed her a fox's brush, having a jewelled bracelet pendant. She missed it and let it lie, and laughed.

"No, no; it's foxie himself!—anybody may have the brush. You're dressed, are you, Harry? You were sure I should come? A thousand happy years to you, and me to see them, if you don't mind. I'm first to wish it, I'm certain! I was awake at three, out at half-past, over Durstan heath, across Eckerthy's fields—we'll pay the old man for damage—down by the plantation, Bran and Sailor at my heels, and here I am. Crow, cocks! bark, dogs! up, larks! I said I'd be first. And now I'm round to stables to stir up Uberly. Don't be tardy, Mr. Harry, and we'll be Commodore Anson and his crew before the world's awake."

We rode out for a couple of hours, and had to knock at a farmhouse for milk and bread. Possibly a sense of independence, owing to the snatching of a meal in mid flight away from home, made Janet exclaim that she would gladly be out all day. Such freaks were exceedingly to my taste. Then I remembered Dipwell, and sure that my father would be there, though he had not written of it, I proposed to ride over. She pleaded for the horses and the squire alternately. Feasting was arranged at Riversley, as well as at Dipwell, and she said musically,—

"Harry, the squire is a very old man, and you may not have many more chances of pleasing him. To-day do, do! To-morrow, ride to your father, if you must: of course you must if you think it right; but don't go this day."

- "Not upset my fortune, Janet?"
- "Don't hurt the kind old man's heart to-day."
- "Oh! you're the girl of his heart, I know."
- "Well, Harry, you have first place, and I want you to keep it."
 - "But here's an oath I've sworn to my father."
 - "He should not have exacted it, I think."
 - "I promised him when I was a youngster."
 - "Then be wiser now, Harry."
- "You have brilliant ideas of the sacredness of engagements."
 - "I think I have common sense, that's all."
 - "This is a matter of feeling."
 - "It seems that you forgot it, though!"

Kiomi's tents on Durstan heath rose into view. I controlled my verbal retort upon Janet to lead her up to the gipsy girl, for whom she had an odd aversion, dating from childhood. Kiomi undertook to ride to Dipwell, a distance of thirty miles, and carry the message that I would be there by nightfall. Tears were on Janet's resolute face as we cantered home.

After breakfast the squire introduced me to his lawyer, Mr. Burgin, who, closeted alone with me, said formally,—

"Mr. Harry Richmond, you are Squire Beltham's grandson, his sole male descendant, and you are

established at present, and as far as we can apprehend for the future, as the direct heir to the whole of his property, which is enormous now, and likely to increase so long as he lives. You may not be aware that your grandfather has a most sagacious eve for business. Had he not been born a rich man he would still have been one of our very greatest millionaires. He has rarely invested but to double his capital; never speculated but to succeed. He may not understand men quite so well. but then he trusts none entirely: so if there is a chasm in his intelligence, there is a bridge thrown across it. The metaphor is obscure perhaps: you will doubtless see my meaning. He knows how to go on his road without being cheated. For himself, your grandfather, Mr. Harry, is the soul of honour. Now, I have to explain certain family matters. The squire's wife, your maternal grandmother, was a rich heiress. Part of her money was settled on her to descend to her children by reversion upon her death. What she herself possessed she bequeathed to them in reversion likewise to their children. Thus at your maternal grandmother's death, your mother and your aunt inherited money to use as their own, and the interest of money tied fast in reversion to their children (in case of marriage) after their death. Your grandfather, as your natural guardian, has left the annual interest of your money to accumulate, and now you are of age he hands it to you, as you see, without much delay. Thus you become this day the possessor of seventy thousand pounds,

respecting the disposal of which I am here to take your orders. Ahem—as to the remaining property of your mother's—the sum held by her for her own use, I mean, it devolved to her husband, your father, who, it is probable, will furnish you an account of it, ah, at his leisure, ah, um! And now, in addition, Mr. Harry, I have the squire's commands to speak to you as a man of business, on what may be deemed a delicate subject, though from the business point of view no peculiar delicacy should pertain to it. Your grandfather will settle on you estates and money to the value of twenty thousand pounds per annum on the day of your union with a young lady in this district, Miss Janet Ilchester. He undertakes likewise to provide her pin-money. Also, let me observe, that it is his request—but he makes no stipulation of it—that you will ultimately assume the name of Beltham, subscribing yourself Harry Lepel Richmond Beltham; or, if it pleases you, Richmond-Beltham, with the junction hyphen. Needless to say, he leaves it to your decision. And now, Mr. Harry, I have done, and may most cordially congratulate you on the blessings it has pleased a kind and discerning Providence to shower on your head."

None so grimly ironical as the obsequious! I thought of Burgin's "discerning" Providence (he spoke with all professional sincerity) in after days.

On the occasion I thought of nothing but the squire's straightforwardness, and grieved to have to wound him. Janet helped me. She hinted with a

bashfulness, quite new to her, that I must go through some ceremony. Guessing what it was, I saluted her on the cheek. The squire observed that a kiss of that sort might as well have been planted on her back hair. "But," said he, and wisely, "I'd rather have the girl worth ten of you, than you be more than her match. Girls like my girl here are precious." Owing to her intercession, he winked at my departure after I had done duty among the tenants; he barely betrayed his vexation, and it must have been excessive.

Heriot and I rode over to Dipwell. Next night we rode back by moonlight with matter for a year of laughter, singing like two Arabian poets praises of Dark and Fair, challenging one to rival the other. Kiomi! Mabel! we shouted separately. We had just seen the dregs of the last of the birthday burgundy.

- "Kiomi! what a splendid panther she is!" cries Heriot; and I: "Teeth and claws, and a skin like a burnt patch on a common! Mabel's like a wonderful sunflower."
- "Butter and eggs! old Richie, and about as much fire as a rushlight. If the race were Fat she'd beat the world."
- "Heriot, I give you my word of honour, the very look of her's eternal summer. Kiomi rings thin—she tinkles; it's the difference between metal and flesh."
- "Did she tinkle, as you call it, when that fellow Destrier, confound him! touched her?"
 - "The little cat! Did you notice Mabel's blush?"

"How could I help it? We've all had a dozen apiece. You saw little Kiomi curled up under the hop and briony?"

"I took her for a dead jackdaw."

"I took her for what she is, and she may slap, scream, tear, and bite, I'll take her yet—and all her tribe crying thief, by way of a diversion. She and I are footed a pair."

His impetuosity surpassed mine so much that I fell to brooding on the superior image of my charmer. The result was, I could not keep away from her. I managed to get home with leaden limbs. Next day I was back at Dipwell.

Such guilt as I have to answer for I may avow. made violent love to this silly country beauty, and held every advantage over her other flatterers. She had met me on the evening of the great twenty-first, she and a line of damsels dressed in white and wearing wreaths, and I had claimed the privilege of saluting her. chief superintendent of the festivities, my father's old cook, Monsieur Alphonse, turned twilight into noonday with a sheaf of rockets at the moment my lips brushed her cheek. It was a kiss marred: I claimed to amend Besides, we had been bosom friends in childhood. My wonder at the growth of the rose I had left but an insignificant thorny shoot was exquisite natural flattery, sweet reason, to which she could not say nonsense. each step we trod on souvenirs, innocent in themselves, had they recurred to childish minds. The whisper, "Hark! it's sunset, Mabel, Martha Thresher calls," clouded her face with stormy sunset colours. respected Martha even then for boldly speaking to me on the girl's behalf. Mrs. Waddy's courage failed. John Thresher and Mark Sweetwinter were overcome by my father's princely prodigality; their heads were turned, they appeared to have assumed that I could do no wrong. To cut short the episode, some one wrote to the squire in uncouth English, telling him I was courting a country lass, and he at once started me for the continent. We had some conversation on money before parting. The squire allowed me a thousand a year, independently of my own income. He counselled prudence, warned me that I was on my trial, and giving me his word of honour that he should not spy into my bank accounts, desired me to be worthy of the trust reposed in me. Speculation he forbade. I left him satisfied with the assurance that I meant to make my grand tour neither as a merchant, a gambler, nor a rake, but simply as a plain English gentleman.

"There's nothing better in the world than that," said he.

Arrived in London, I left my travelling companion, the Rev. Ambrose Peterborough, sipping his port at the hotel, and rushed down to Dipwell, shot a pebble at Mabel's window by morning twilight, and soon had her face at the casement. But it was a cloudy and rainbeaten face. She pointed towards the farm, saying that my father was there.

- "Has he grieved you, Mabel?" I asked softly.
- "Oh, no, not he! he wouldn't, he couldn't; he talked right. Oh, go, go; for I haven't a foot to move. And don't speak so soft; I can't bear kindness."

My father in admonishing her had done it tenderly, I was sure. Tenderness was the weapon which had wounded her, and so she shrank from it; and if I had reproached and abused her she might, perhaps, have obeyed me by coming out, not to return. She was deaf. I kissed my hand to her regretfully; a condition of spirit gradually dissolved by the haunting phantom of her forehead and mouth crumpling up for fresh floods of tears. Had she concealed that vision with her handkerchief, I might have waited to see her before I saw my father, and have been myself a prince deserving curses. He soon changed the set of the current.

"Our little Mabel here," he said, "is an inflammable puss, I fear. By the way, talking of girls, I have a surprise for you. Remind me of it when we touch Ostend. We may want a yacht there to entertain high company. I have set inquiries afloat for the hire of a schooner. This child Mabel can read and write, I suppose? Best write no letters, boy. Do not make old Dipwell a thorny bed. I have a portrait to show you, Richie. A portrait! I think you will say the original was worthy of more than to be taken up and thrown away like a weed. You see, Richie, girls have only one chance in the world, and good God! to ruin that—no, no. You shall see this portrait. A pretty

little cow-like Mabel, I grant you. But to have her on the conscience! What a coronet to wear! My young Lord Destrier—you will remember him as one of our guests here; I brought him to make your acquaintance; well, he would not be scrupulous, it is possible. Ay, but compare yourself with him, Richie! and you and I, let us love one another and have no nettles."

He flourished me away to London, into new spheres of fancy. He was irresistible.

In a London club I was led up to the miniature of a youthful woman, singular for her endearing beauty. Her cheeks were merry red, her lips lively with the spark of laughter, her eyes in good union with them, showing you the laughter was gentle; eyes of overflowing blue light.

"Who is she?" I asked.

The old-fashioned building of the powdered hair counselled me to add, "Who was she?"

Captain DeWitt, though a member of the club, seemed unable to inform me. His glance consulted my father. He hummed and drawled, and said: "Mistress Anastasia Dewsbury; that was her name."

"She does not look a grandmother," said my father.

"She would be one by this time, I dare say," said I.

We gazed in silence.

"Yes!" he sighed. "She was a charming actress, and one of the best of women. A noble-minded young

woman! A woman of cultivation and genius! Do you see a broken heart in that face? No? Very well. A walk will take us to her grave. She died early."

I was breathing "Who?" when he said, "She was my mother, my dear."

It was piteous.

We walked to an old worn flat stone in a London street, whereunder I had to imagine those features of beautiful humanity lying shut from us.

CHAPTER III.

I MEET THE PRINCESS.1

HEARING that I had not slept at the hotel, the Rev. Ambrose rushed down to Riversley with melancholy ejaculations, and was made to rebound by the squire's contemptuous recommendation to him to learn to know something of the spirit of young bloods, seeing that he had the nominal charge of one, and to preach his sermon in secret, if he would be sermonizing out of The good gentleman had not exactly understood his duties, or how to conduct them. Far from objecting to find me in company with my father, as he would otherwise have done by transmitting information of that fact to Riversley, he now congratulated himself on it, and after the two had conversed apart, cordially agreed to our scheme of travelling together. The squire had sickened him. I believe that by comparison he saw in my father a better friend of youth.

"We shall not be the worse for a ghostly adviser at hand," my father said to me with his quaintest air of gravity and humour mixed, which was not insincerely vol. II.

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grave, for the humour was unconscious. "An accredited casuist may frequently be a treasure. And I avow it, I like to travel with my private chaplain."

Mr. Peterborough's temporary absence had allowed me time for getting ample funds placed at our disposal through the agency of my father's solicitors, Messrs. Dettermain and Newson, whom I already knew from certain transactions with them on his behalf. They were profoundly courteous to me, and showed me his box, and alluded to his Case—a long one, and a lamentable, I was taught to apprehend, by their lugubriously professional tone about it. The question was naturally prompted in me, "Why do you not go on with it?"

"Want of funds."

"There's no necessity to name that now," I insisted. But my father desired them to postpone any further exposition of the case, saying "Pleasure first, business by-and-by. That, I take it, is in the order of our great mother Nature, gentlemen. I will not have him help shoulder his father's pack until he has had his fill of entertainment."

A smooth voyage brought us in view of the towers of Ostend towards sunrise. Standing with my father on deck, and gazing on this fringe of the grand romantic Continent, I remembered our old travels, and felt myself bound to him indissolubly, ashamed of my recent critical probings of his character. My boy's love for him returned in full force. I was sufficiently cognizant of his history

to know that he kept his head erect, lighted by the fire of his robust heart in the thick of overhanging natal clouds. As the way is with men when they are too happy to be sentimental, I chattered of anything but my feelings.

"What a capital idea that was of yours to bring down old Alphonse to Dipwell! You should have heard old John Thresher and Mark Sweetwinter and the others grumbling at the interference of 'French frogs' with their beef, though Alphonse vowed he only ordered the ox to be turned faster, and he dressed their potatoes in six different ways. I doubt if Dipwell has composed itself yet. You know I sat for president in their tent while the beef went its first round; and Alphonse was in an awful hurry to drag me into what he called the royal tent. By the way, you should have hauled the standard down at sunset."

"Not when the son had not come down among us," said my father, smiling.

"Well, I forgot to tell you about Alphonse. By the way, we'll have him in our service. There was he plucking at me: 'Monsieur Henri-Richie, Monsieur Henri-Richie! milles complimens . . . et les potages, Monsieur!—à la Camérani, à la tortue, aux petits pois . . . c'est en vrai artiste que j'ai su tout retarder jusqu'au dernier moment. . . . Monsieur! cher Monsieur Henri-Richie, je vous en supplie, laissez-là ces planteurs de choux.' And John Thresher, as spokesman for the rest: 'Master Harry, we beg to say, in m name, we

can't masticate comfortably while we've got a notion Mr. Frenchman he's present here to play his Frenchified tricks with our plain wholesome dishes. Our opinion is, he don't know beef from hedgehog; and let him trim 'em, and egg 'em, and breadcrumb 'em, and pound the mess all his might, and then tak' and roll 'em into balls, we say we wun't, for we can't make English muscle out o' that.'—And Alphonse, quite indifferent to the vulgar: 'Hé! mais pensez donc au Papa, Monsieur Henri-Richie, sans doute il a une santé de fer: mais encore faut-il lui ménager le suc gastrique, pancréatique. . . ."

- "Ay, ay!" laughed my father; "what sets you thinking of Alphonse?"
- "I suppose because I shall have to be speaking French in an hour."
 - "German, Richie, German."
 - "But these Belgians speak French."
- "Such French as it is. You will, however, be engaged in a German conversation first, I suspect."
- "Very well, I'll stumble on. I don't much like it."
- "In six hours from this second of time, Richie, boy, I undertake to warrant you fonder of the German tongue than of any other spoken language."

I looked at him. He gave me a broad, pleasant smile, without sign of a jest lurking in one corner.

The scene attracted me. Laughing fishwife faces radiant with sea-bloom in among the weedy pier-piles,

and sombre blue-cheeked officers of the douane, with their double row of buttons extending the breadth of their shoulders. My father won Mr. Peterborough's approval by declaring cigars which he might easily have passed.

"And now, sir,"—he used the commanding unction of a lady's doctor,—"you to bed, and a short repose. We will, if it pleases you, breakfast at eight. I have a surprise for Mr. Richie. We are about to beat the drum in the market-place, and sing out for echoes."

"Indeed, sir?" said the simple man.

"I promise you we shall not disturb you, Mr. Peterborough. You have reached that middle age, have you not, when sleep is, so to put it, your capital? And your bodily and mental activity is the interest you draw from it to live on. You have three good hours. So, then, till we meet at the breakfast-table."

My father's first proceeding at the hotel was to examine the list of visitors. He questioned one of the waiters aside, took information from him, and seized my arm rather tremulously, saying,—

"They are here. 'Tis as I expected. And she is taking the morning breath of sea-air on the dunes. Come, Richie, come."

"Who's the 'she?" I asked, incuriously.

"Well, she is young, she is of high birth, she is charming. We have a crowned head or two here. I observe in you, Richie, an extraordinary deficiency of memory. She has had an illness; Neptune speed her



recovery! Now for a turn at our German. Die Strasse ruhen; die Stadt schläft; aber dort, siehst Du, dort liegt das blaue Meer, das nimmerschlafende! She is gazing on it, and breathing it, Richie. Ach! ihr jauchzende Seejungfern. On my soul, I expect to see the very loveliest of her sex! You must not be dismayed at pale cheeks—blasse Wangen. Her illness has been alarming. Why, this air is the top of life; it will, and it shall, revive her. How will she address him?—
'Freund,' in my presence, perchance: she has her invalid's privilege. 'Theure Prinzessin' you might venture on. No ice! Ay, there she is!"

Solitary, on the long level of the sand-bank, I perceived a group that became discernible as three persons attached to an invalid's chair, moving leisurely towards us. I was in the state of mind between divination and doubt when the riddle is not impossible to read, would but the heart cease its hurry an instant; a tumbled sky where the break is coming. It came. The dear old days of my wanderings with Temple framed her face. I knew her without need of pause or retrospect. The crocus raising its cup pointed as when it pierced the earth, and the crocus stretched out on earth, wounded by frost, is the same flower. The face was the same, though the features were changed. Unaltered in expression, but wan, and the kind blue eyes large upon lean brows, her aspect was that of one who had been half caught away and still shook faintly in the relaxing invisible grasp.

We stopped at a distance of half-a-dozen paces to allow her time for recollection. She eyed us softly in a fixed manner, while the sea-wind blew her thick redbrown hair to threads on her cheek. Colour on the fair skin told us we were recognized.

- "Princess Ottilia!" said my father.
- "It is I, my friend," she answered. "And you?"
- "With more health than I am in need of, dearest princess."
 - "And he?"
- "Harry Richmond! my son, now of age, commencing his tour; and he has not forgotten the farewell bunch of violets."

Her eyelids gently lifted, asking me.

- "Nor the mount you did me the honour to give me on the little Hungarian," said I.
- "How nice this sea-air is!" she spoke in English. "England and sea go together in my thoughts. And you are here! I have been down very low, near the lowest. But your good old sea makes me breathe again. I want to toss on it. Have you yet seen the Markgräfin?"

My father explained that we had just landed from the boat.

- "Is our meeting, then, an accident?"
- "Dear princess, I heard of your being out by the shore."
- "Ah! kind: and you walked to meet me? I love that as well, though I love chance. And it is chance

that brings you here! I looked out on the boat from England while they were dressing me. I cannot have too much of the morning, for then I have all to myself: sea and sky and I. The night people are all asleep, and you come like an old Märchen."

Her eyelids dropped without closing.

- "Speak no more to her just at present," said an English voice, Miss Sibley's. Schwartz, the huge dragoon, whose big black horse hung near him in my memory like a phantom, pulled the chair at a quiet pace, head downward. A young girl clad in plain black walked beside Miss Sibley, following the wheels.
- "Danger is over," Miss Sibley answered my gaze. "She is convalescent. You see how weak she is."

I praised the lady for what I deemed her great merit in not having quitted the service of the princess.

"Oh!" said she, "my adieux to Sarkeld were uttered years ago. But when I heard of her fall from the horse I went and nursed her. We were once in dread of her leaving us. She sank as if she had taken some internal injury. It may have been only the shock to her system, and the cessation of her accustomed exercise. She has a little over-studied."

"The margravine?"

"The margravine is really very good and affectionate, and has won my esteem. So you and your father are united at last? We have often talked of you. Oh! that day up by the tower. But, do you know, the statue is positively there now, and no one—no one who had the

privilege of beholding the first bronze Albrecht Wohlgemuth, Fürst von Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld, no one will admit that the second is half worthy of him. I can feel to this day the leap of the heart in my mouth when the statue dismounted. The prince sulked for a month: the margravine still longer at your father's evasion. She could not make allowance for the impulsive man: such a father: such a son!"

"Thank you, thank you most humbly," said I, bowing to her shadow of a mock curtsey.

The princess's hand appeared at a side of the chair. We hastened to her.

"Let me laugh, too," she prayed.

Miss Sibley was about to reply, but stared, and delight sprang to her lips in a quick cry.

- "What medicine is this? Why, the light of morning has come on you, my darling!"
 - "I am better, dearest, better."
 - "You sigh, my own."
- "No; I breathe lots, lots of salt air now, and lift like a boat. Ask him—he had a little friend, much shorter than himself, who came the whole way with him out of true friendship—ask him where is the friend?"

Miss Sibley turned her head to me.

- "Temple," said I; "Temple is a midshipman; he is at sea."
- "That is something to think of," the princess murmured, and dropped her eyelids a moment. She

resumed: "The Grand Seigneur was at Vienna last year, and would not come to Sarkeld, though he knew I was ill."

My father stooped low.

"The grand Seigneur, your servant, dear princess, was an Ottoman Turk, and his Grand Vizier advised him to send flowers in his place weekly."

"I had them, and when we could get those flowers nowhere else," she replied. "So it was you! So my friends have been about me."

During the remainder of the walk I was on one side of the chair, and her little maid on the other, while my father to rearward conversed with Miss Sibley. The princess took a pleasure in telling me that this Aennchen of hers knew me well, and had known me before ever her mistress had seen me. Aennchen was the eldest of the two children Temple and I had eaten breakfast with in the forester's hut. I felt myself as if in the forest again, merely wondering at the growth of the trees, and the narrowness of my vision in those days.

At parting, the princess said,-

"Is my English improved? You smiled at it once. I will ask you when I meet you next."

"It is my question," I whispered to my own ears. She caught the words.

"Why do you say-'It is my question?"

I was constrained to remind her of her old forms of English speech.

"You remember that? Adieu," she said.

My father considerately left me to carry on my promenade alone. I crossed the ground she had traversed, noting every feature surrounding it, the curving wheel-track, the thin prickly sand-herbage, the wave-mounds, the sparse wet shells and pebbles, the gleaming flatness of the water, and the vast horizonboundary of pale flat land level with shore, looking like a dead sister of the sea. By a careful examination of my watch and the sun's altitude, I was able to calculate what would, in all likelihood, have been his height above vonder waves when her chair was turned towards the city, at a point I reached in the track. But of the matter then simultaneously occupying my mind, to recover which was the second supreme task I proposed to myself-of what I also was thinking upon the stroke of five o'clock, I could recollect nothing. I could not even recollect whether I happened to be looking on sun and waves when she must have had them full and glorious in her face.

CHAPTER IV.

ON BOARD A YACHT.

WITH the heartiest consent I could give, and a blank cheque, my father returned to England to hire forthwith a commodious yacht, fitted and manned. Before going he discoursed of prudence in our expenditure; though not for the sake of the mere money in hand, which was a trifle, barely more than the half of my future income; but that the squire, should he by and by bethink him of inspecting our affairs, might perceive we were not spendthrifts.

"I promised you a surprise, Richie," said he, "and you have had it; whether at all equal to your expectations is for you to determine. I was aware of the margravine's intention to bring the princess to these seasands; they are famous on the Continent. It was bruited last winter and spring that she would be here in the season for bathing; so I held it likely we should meet. We have, you behold. In point of fact, we owe the good margravine some show of hospitality. The princess has a passion for tossing on the sea. To her a

yacht is a thing dropped from the moon. His highness the prince her father could as soon present her with one as with the moon itself. The illustrious Serenity's revenue is absorbed, my boy, in the state he has to support. As for his daughter's dowry, the young gentleman who anticipates getting one with her, I commend to the practise of his whistling. It will be among the sums you may count, if you are a moderate arithmetician, in groschen. The margravine's income I should reckon to approach twenty thousand per annum, and she proves her honourable sense that she holds it in trust for others by dispersing it rapidly. I fear she loves cards. So, then, I shall go and hire the yacht through Dettermain and Newson, furnish it with piano and swing-cot, &c.; and if the ladies shrink from a cruise they can have an occasional sail. Here are we at their service. I shall be seriously baffled by fortune if I am not back to you at the end of a week. You will take your early morning walk, I presume. Sunday see that our chaplain, the excellent Mr. Peterborough, officiates for the assembled Protestants of all nations. It excites our English enthusiasm. In addition, son Richie, it is peculiarly our duty. I, at least, hold the view that it is a family duty. Think it over, Richie boy. Providence, you see, has sent us the man. As for me, I feel as if I were in the dawn of one life with all the mature experience of another. I am calm, I am perfectly unexcited, and I tell you, old son, I believe-pick among the highest-our destinies are about the most brilliant of any couple in Great Britain."

His absence relieved me in spite of my renewed pleasure in his talk; I may call it a thirsty craving to have him inflating me, puffing the deep unillumined treasure-pits of my nature with laborious hints, as mines are filled with air to keep the miners going. While he talked he made these inmost recesses habitable. the pain lay in my having now and then to utter replies. The task of speaking was hateful. I found a sweetness in brooding unrealizingly over hopes and dreams and possibilities, and I let him go gladly that I might enjoy a week of silence, just taking impressions as they came, like the sands in the ebb-tide. The impression of the morning was always enough for a day's medita-The green colour and the crimson athwart it, and higher up the pinky lights, flamingo feathers, on a warm half-circle of heaven, in hue between amethyst and milky opal; then the rim of the sun's disc not yet severe; and then the monstrous shadow of tall Schwartz darting at me along the sand, then the princess. This picture, seen at sunrise, lasted till I slept. It stirred no thoughts, conjured no images, it possessed me. the afternoon the margravine accompanied the princess to a point facing seaward, within hearing of the military band. She did me the favour to tell me that she tolerated me until I should become efficient in German to amuse her, but the dulness of the Belgian city compared with her lively German watering-places compelled her to try my powers of fun in French, and in French I had to do duty, and failed in my office.

"Do you know," said she, "that your honourable papa is one in a million? He has the life of a regiment in his ten fingers. What astonishes me is that he does not make fury in that England of yours—that Lapland! Je ne puis me passer de cet homme! He offends me, he trifles, he outrages, he dares permit himself to be indignant. Bon! we part, and absence pleads for him with the eloquence of Satan. I am his victim. Does he, then, produce no stir whatever in your England? But what a people! But yes, you resemble us, as bottles bottles; seulement, you are emptied of your wine. Ce Monsieur Pétèrbooroo'! Il m'agace les nerfs. It cannot be blood in his veins. One longs to see him cuffed, to see if he has the English lion in him, one knows not where. But you are so, you English, when not intoxicated. And so censorious! You win your battles, they say, upon beer and cordials: it is why you never can follow up a success. Je tiens cela du Maréchal Prince B--. Let that pass. One groans at your intolerable tristesse. La vie en Angleterre est comme un marais. It is a scandal to human nature. It blows fogs, foul vapours, joint-stiffnesses, agues, pestilences, over us here,—yes, here! That is your best side: but your worst is too atrocious! Mon Dieu; Your men-rascals! Your women-rascals!

"Good soul!" the princess arrested her, "I beg that you will not abuse England."



"Have I abused England?" exclaimed the margravine. "Nay, then, it was because England is shockingly unjust to the most amusing, the most reviving, charming of men. There is he fresh as a green, bubbling well, and those English decline to do honour to his source. Now tell me, you!" She addressed me imperiously. "Are you prosecuting his claims? Are you besieging your Government? What! you are in the season of generosity, an affectionate son, wealthy as a Magyar prince of flocks, herds, mines, and men, and you let him stand in the shade deprived of his birthright? Are you a purse-proud commoner or an imbecile?"

"My whimsy aunt!" the princess interposed again, "now you have taken to abusing a defenceless Englishman."

"Nothing of the sort, child. I compliment him on his looks and manners; he is the only one of his race who does not appear to have marched out of a sentinel's box with a pocket-mirror in his hand. I thank him from my soul for not cultivating the national cat's whisker. None can imagine what I suffer from the oppressive sight of his Monsieur Pétèrbooroo'! And they are of one pattern—the entire nation! He! no, he has the step of a trained bloodhorse. Only, as Kaunitz, or somebody, said of Joseph II., or somebody, he thinks or he chews. Englishmen's mouths were clearly not made for more purposes than one. I am so utterly wearied, I could pray for the diversion of a descent of rain. The life here is as bad as in

Rippau. I might just as well be in Rippau doing duty: the silly people complain, I hear. I am gathering dust. These, my dear, these are the experiences which age women at a prodigious rate. I feel chains on my limbs here."

"Madame, I would," said I, "that I were the Perseus to relieve you of your monster Ennui, but he is coming quickly."

"You see he has his pretty phrases!" cried the margravine; adding encouragingly: "S'il n'est pas tant soit peu impertinent?"

The advance of some German or Russian nobleman spared me further efforts.

We were on shore, listening to the band in the afternoon, when a sail like a spark of pure white stood on the purple black edge of a storm-cloud. It was the yacht. By sunset it was moored off shore, and at night hung with variegated lamps. Early next morning we went on board. The ladies were astonished at the extent of the vessel, and its luxurious fittings and cunning arrangements. My father, in fact, had negotiated for the hire of the yacht some weeks previously with his accustomed forethought.

"House and town and fortress provisioned, and moveable at will!" the margravine interjected repeatedly.

The princess was laid on raised pillows in her swingcot under an awning aft, and watched the sailors, the splendid offspring of old sea-fights, as I could observe vol. II. 24

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her spirited fancy conceiving them. They were a set of men to point to for an answer to the margravine's strictures on things English.

"Then, are you the captain, my good Herr Heilbrunn?" the margravine asked my father.

He was dressed in cheerful blue, wearing his cheerfullest air, and seemed strongly inclined for the part of captain, but presented the actual commander of the schooner-yacht, and helped him through the margravine's interrogations.

"All is excellent,—excellent for a day's sail," she said. "I have no doubt you could nourish my system for a month, but to deal frankly with you—prepared meats and cold pies!—to face them once is as much as I am capable of."

"Dear Lady Field-Marshal," returned my father, "the sons of Neptune would be of poor account, if they could not furnish you cookery at sea."

They did, for Alphonse was on board. He and my father had a hot discussion about the margravine's dishes, Alphonse declaring that it was against his conscience to season them pungently, and my father preaching expediency. Alphonse spoke of the artist and his duty to his art, my father of the wise diplomatist who manipulated individuals without any sacrifice of principle. They were partly at play, of course, both having humour. It ended in the margravine's being enraptured. The delicacy of the invalid's dishes, was beyond praise. "So, then, we are absolutely better

housed and accommodated than on shore!" the margravine made her wonder heard, and from that fell to enthusiasm for the vessel. After a couple of pleasant smooth-sailing days, she consented to cruise off the coasts of France and England. Adieu to the sands. Throughout the cruise she was placable, satisfied with earth and sea, and constantly eulogizing herself for this novel state of serenity. Cards, and a collection of tripping French books bound in vellow, danced the gavotte with time, which made the flying minutes endurable to her: and for relaxation there was here the view of a shining town dropped between green hills to dip in sea-water, yonder a ship of merchandise or war to speculate upon, trawlers, collier-brigs, sea-birds, wave over wave. No cloud on sun and moon. We had gold and silver in our track, like the believeable children of fairyland. The princess, lying in her hammock-cot on deck. both day and night, or for the greater part of the night, let her eyes feast incessantly on a laughing sea: when she turned them to any of us, pure pleasure sparkled in them. The breezy salt hours were visible ecstasy to her blood. If she spoke it was but to utter a few hurried, happy words, and shrink as you see the lightning behind a cloud-rack, suggestive of fiery swift emotion within, and she gazed away overjoyed at the swoop and plunge of the gannet, the sunny spray, the waves curling crested or down-like. At night a couple of sailors, tender as women, moved her in the cot to her cabin. We heard her voice in the dark of the morning,

and her little maid Aennchen came out and was met by me; and I at that hour had the privilege to help move her back to her favourite place, and strap the iron-stand fast, giving the warm-hooded cot room to swing. The keen sensations of a return to health amid unwonted scenes made things magical to her. When she beheld our low green Devon hills she signalled for help to rise, and "That is England!" she said, summoning to her beautiful clear eveballs the recollection of her first desire to see my country. Her petition was that the yacht should go in nearer and nearer to the land till she could discern men, women, and children, and their occupations. A fisherman and his wife sat in the porch above their hanging garden, the woman knitting, the man mending his nets, barefooted boys and girls astride the keel of a boat below them. The princess eyed them and wept. "They give me happiness, I can give them nothing," she said.

The margravine groaned impatiently at talk of such a dieaway sort.

My father sent a couple of men on shore with a gift of money to their family in the name of the Princess Ottilia. How she thanked him for his prompt ideas! "It is because you are generous you read one well."

She had never thanked me. I craved for that vibrating music as of her deep heart penetrated and thrilling, but shrank from grateful words which would have sounded payment. Running before the wind swiftly on a night of phosphorescent sea, when the waves opened to white

hollows with frayed white ridges, wreaths of hissing silver, her eyelids closed, and her hand wandered over the silken coverlet to the hammock-cloth, and up, in a blind effort to touch. Mine joined to it. Little Aennchen was witness. Ottilia held me softly till her slumber was deep.

CHAPTER V.

IN VIEW OF THE HOHENZOLLERN'S BIRTHPLACE.

Our cruise came to an end in time to save the margravine from yawning. The last day of it was windless, and we hung in sight of the colourless low Flemish coast for hours, my father tasking his ingenuity to amuse her. He sang with Miss Sibley, rallied Mr. Peterborough, played picquet to lose, threw over the lead-line to count the fathoms, and whistling for the breeze, said to me, "We shall decidedly have to offer her an exhibition of tipsy British seamen as a final resource. The case is grave either way; but we cannot allow the concluding impression to be a dull one."

It struck me with astonishment to see the vigilant watch she kept over the princess this day, after having left her almost uninterruptedly to my care.

"You are better?" She addressed Ottilia. "You can sit up? You think you can walk? Then I have acted rightly, nay, judiciously,—I have not made a sacrifice for nothing. I took the cruise, mind you, on your account. You would study yourself to the bone,

till you looked like a canary's quill, with that Herr Professor of yours. Now I've given you a dose of life. Yes, you begin to look like human flesh. Something has done you good."

The princess flushing scarlet, the margravine cried,--

"There's no occasion for you to have the whole British army in your cheeks. Goodness me! what's the meaning of it? Why, you answer me like flags, banners, uhlans' pennons, full-frocked cardinals!"

My father stepped in.

"Ah, yes," said the margravine. "But you little know, my good Roy, the burden of an unmarried princess; and heartily glad shall I be to hand her over to Baroness Turckems. That's her instituted governess, duenna, dragon,—what you will. She was born for responsibility, I was not; it makes me miserable. I have had no holiday. True, while she was like one of their wax virgins I had a respite. Fortunately, I hear of you English that, when you fall to sighing, you suck your thumbs and are consoled."

My father bowed her, and smiled her, and whirled her away from the subject. I heard him say, under his breath, that he had half a mind to issue orders for an allowance of grog to be served out to the sailors on the spot. I suggested, as I conceived in a similar spirit, the forcible ducking of Mr. Peterborough. He appeared to entertain and relish the notion in earnest.

"It might do. It would gratify her enormously,"

he said, and eyed the complacent clerical gentleman with transparent jealousy of his claims to decent treatment. "Otherwise, I must confess," he added, "I am at a loss. My wits are in the doldrums."

He went up to Mr. Peterborough, and, with an air of great sincerity and courtesy, requested him in French to create a diversion for her Highness the Margravine of Rippau during the extreme heat of the afternoon by precipitating himself headlong into forty fathoms, either attached or unattached. His art in baffling Mr. Peterborough's attempts to treat the unheard-of request as a jest was extraordinary. The ingenuity of his successive pleas for pressing such a request pertinaciously upon Mr. Peterborough in particular, his fixed eye, yet cordial deferential manner, and the stretch of his forefinger, and argumentative turn of the head-indicative of an armed disputant fully on the alert, and as if it were of profound and momentous importance that he should thoroughly defeat and convince his man-overwhelmed Mr. Peterborough, not being supple in French, fell back upon his English with a flickering smile of protestation; but even in his native tongue he could make no head against the tremendous volubility and brief, eager pauses besetting him.

The farce was too evanescent for me to reproduce it.

Peterborough turned and fled to his cabin. Half the crew were on the broad grin. The margravine sprang to my father's arm, and entreated him to be her guest in her Austrian mountain summer-seat. Ottilia was now

her darling and her comfort. Whether we English youth sucked our thumbs, or sighed furiously, she had evidently ceased to care. Mr. Peterborough assured me at night that he had still a difficulty in persuading himself of my father's absolute sanity, so urgent was the fire of his eye in seconding his preposterous proposition; and, as my father invariably treated with the utmost reserve a farce played out, they never arrived at an understanding about it, beyond a sententious agreement once, in the extreme heat of an Austrian highland valley, that the option of taking a header into sea-water would there be divine.

Our yacht winged her way home. Prince Ernest of Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld, accompanied by Baroness Turckems. and Prince Otto, his nephew, son of the Prince of Eisenberg, a captain of Austrian lancers, joined the margravine in Würtemberg, and we felt immediately that domestic affairs were under a different manage-Baroness Turckems relieved the margravine of her guard. She took the princess into custody. Prince Ernest greeted us with some affability; but it was communicated to my father that he expected an apology before he could allow himself to be as absolutely unclouded towards us as the blaze of his titles. My father declined to submit; so the prince inquired of us what our destination was. Down the Danube to the Black Sea and Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt, the Nile, the Desert, India, possibly, and the Himalayas, my father said. The prince bowed. The

highest personages, if they cannot travel, are conscious of a sort of airy majesty pertaining to one who can command so wide and far a flight. We were supplicated by the margravine to appease her brother's pride with half a word. My father was firm. The margravine reached her two hands to him. He kissed over them each in turn. They interchanged smart semi-flattering or cutting sentences.

- "Good!" she concluded; "now I sulk you for five years."
- "You would decapitate me, madam, and weep over my astonished head, would you not?"
- "Upon my honour, I would," she shook herself to reply.

He smiled rather sadly.

- "No pathos!" she implored him.
- "Not while I live, madam," said he.

At this her countenance underwent a tremor.

"And when that ends . . . friend! well, I shall have had my last laugh in the world."

Both seemed affected. My father murmured some soothing word.

- "Then you do mean to stay with me?" the margravine caught him up.
 - "Not in livery, your highness."
- "To the deuce with you!" would be a fair translation of the exalted lady's reply. She railed at his insufferable pride.
 - "And you were wrong, wrong," she pursued. "You

offended the prince mightily; you travestied his most noble ancestor——"

- "In your service, may it please you."
- "You offended, offended him, I say, and you haven't the courage to make reparation. And when I tell you the prince is manageable as your ship, if you will only take and handle the rudder. Do you perceive?"

She turned to me.

"Hither, Mr. Harry; come, persuade him. Why, you do not desire to leave me, do you?"

Much the reverse. But I had to congratulate myself subsequently on having been moderate in the expression of my wishes; for, as my father explained to me, with sufficient lucidity to enlighten my dulness, the margravine was tempting him grossly. She saw more than I did of his plans. She could actually affect to wink at them that she might gain her point, and have her amusement, and live for the hour, treacherously beguiling a hoodwinked pair to suppose her partially blind or wholly complaisant. My father knew her and fenced her.

"Had I yielded," he said, when my heart was low after the parting, "I should have shown her my hand. I do not choose to manage the prince that the margravine may manage me. I pose my pride—immolate my son to it, Richie? I hope not. No. At Vienna we shall receive an invitation to Sarkeld for the winter, if we hear nothing of entreaties to turn aside to Ischl at

Munich. She is sure to entreat me to accompany her on her annual visit to her territory of Rippau, which she detests; and, indeed, there is not a vine in the length and breadth of it. She thought herself broad awake, and I have dosed her with an opiate."

He squeezed my fingers tenderly. I was in want both of consolation and very delicate handling when we drove out of the little Würtemberg town: I had not taken any farewell from Ottilia. Baroness Turckems was already exercising her functions of dragon. With the terrible forbidding word "Repose" she had wafted the princess to her chamber in the evening, and folded her inextricably round and round in the morning. margravine huffed, the prince icy, Ottilia invisible, I found myself shooting down from the heights of a dream among shattered fragments of my cloud palace before I well knew that I had left off treading common earth. All my selfish nature cried out to accuse Ottilia. We drove along a dusty country road that lay like a glaring shaft of the desert between vineyards and hills.

"There," said my father, waving his hand where the hills on our left fell to a distance and threw up a lofty head and neck cut with one white line, "your Hohenzollerns shot up there. Their castle looks like a tight military stock. Upon my word, their native mountain has the air of a drum-major. Mr. Peterborough, have you a mind to climb it? We are at your disposal."

- "Thank you, thank you, sir," said the Rev. Ambrose, gazing enthusiastically, but daunted by the heat: "if it is your wish?"
- "We have none that is not yours, Mr. Peterborough. You love ruins, and we are adrift just now. I presume we can drive to the foot of the ascent. I should wish my son perhaps to see the source of great houses."

Here it was that my arm was touched by old Schwartz. He saluted stiffly, and leaning from the saddle on the trot of his horse at an even pace with our postilion, stretched out a bouquet of roses. I seized it palpitating, smelt the roses, and wondered. May a man write of his foolishness?—tears rushed to my eyes. Schwartz was far behind us when my father caught sight of the magical flowers.

"Come!" said he, glowing, "we will toast the Hohenstaufens and the Hohenzollerns to-night, Richie."

Later, when I was revelling in fancies sweeter than the perfume of the roses, he pressed their stems reflectively, unbound them, and disclosed a slip of crested paper. On it was written:

"Violets are over."

Plain words; but a princess had written them, and never did so golden a halo enclose any piece of human handiwork.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TIME OF ROSES.

I SAT and thrilled from head to foot with a deeper emotion than joy. Not I, but a detached self allied to the careering universe and having life in it.

'Violets are over.'

The first strenuous effort of my mind was to grasp the meaning, subtle as odour, in these words. Innumerable meanings wreathed away unattainable to thought. The finer senses could just perceive them ere they vanished. Then as I grew material two camps were pitched and two armies prepared to fight to establish one distinct meaning. 'Violets are over, so I send you roses;' she writes you simple fact. Nay, 'Our time of violets is over, now for us the roses;' she gives you heavenly symbolism.

'From violets to roses, so run the seasons.'

Or is it-

'From violets to roses, thus far have we two travelled?'

But would she merely say, 'I have not this kind of flower, and I send you another?'

True, but would she dare to say, 'The violets no longer express my heart, take the roses?'

'Maidenly, and a Princess, yet sweet and grateful, she gives you the gracefullest good speed.'

'Noble above all human distinctions, she binds you to herself, if you will it.'

The two armies came into collision, the luck of the day going to the one I sided with.

But it was curiously observable that the opposing force recovered energy from defeat, while mine languished in victory. I headed them alternately, and it invariably happened so.

- 'She cannot mean so much as this.'
- 'She must mean more than that.'

Thus the Absolute and the Symbolical factions struggled on. A Princess drew them as the moon the tides.

By degrees they subsided and united, each reserving its view; a point at which I imagined myself to have regained my proper humility. 'The princess has sent you these flowers out of her homely friendliness; not seeing you to speak her farewell, she, for the very reason that she can do it innocent of any meaning whatsoever, bids you be sure you carry her esteem with you. Is the sun of blue heavens guilty of the shadow it casts? Clear your mind. She means nothing. Warmth and beauty come from her, and are on you for the moment.

—But full surely she is a thing to be won: she is human: did not her hand like a gentle snake seek yours, and detain it, and bear it away into the heart of her sleep?—Be moderate. Let not a thought or a dream spring from her condescension, lest you do outrage to her noble simplicity. Look on that high Hohenzollern hill-top: she also is of the line of those who help to found illustrious houses: what are you?'

I turned to my father and stared him in the face. What was he? Were we not losing precious time in not prosecuting his suit? I put this question to him, believing that it would sound as too remote from my thoughts to betray them. He glanced at the roses, and answered gladly,—

"Yes! no, no! we must have our holiday. Mr. Peterborough is for exploring a battle-field in the neighbourhood of Munich. He shall. I wish him to see the Salzkammergut, and have a taste of German Court-life. Allow me to be captain, Richie, will you? I will show you how battles are gained and mountains are scaled. That young Prince Otto of Eisenberg is a fine young fellow. Those Austrian cavalry regiments are good training-schools for the carriage of a young man's head and limbs. I would match my boy against him in the exercises—fencing, shooting, riding."

"As you did at Bath," said I.

He replied promptly: "We might give him Anna Penrhys to marry. English wives are liked here adored if they fetch a dowry. Concerning my suit, Richie, enough if it keeps pace with us; and we are not going slow. It is a thing certain. Dettermain and Newson have repeatedly said, 'Money, money! hand us money, and we guarantee you a public recognition.' Money we now have. But we cannot be in two fields at once. Is it your desire to return to England?"

"Not at all," said I, with a chill at the prospect.

"If it is-?" he pressed me, and relenting added: "I confess I enjoy this Suabian land as much as you do. Indolence is occasionally charming. I am at work, nevertheless. But, Richie, determine not to think little of yourself: there is the main point; believe me, that is half the battle. You, sir, are one of the wealthiest gentlemen in Europe. You are pronouncedly a gentleman. That is what we can say of you at present, as you appear in the world's eye. And you are by descent illustrious. Well, no more of that, but consider if you kneel down, who will decline to put a foot on you? Princes have the habit, and they do it as a matter of course. Challenge them. And they, Richie, are particularly susceptible to pity for the misfortunes of their class—kind, I should say, for class it is not; now I have done. All I tell you is, I intend you, under my guidance, to be happy."

I thought his remarks the acutest worldly wisdom I had ever heard,—his veiled method of treating my case the shrewdest, delicatest, and most consoling, most inspiring. It had something of the mystical power of the Oracles,—the power which belongs to anonymous

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writing. Had he disposed of my apparent rival, and exalted me to the level of a princely family, in open speech, he would have conveyed no balm to me—I should have classed it as one confident man's opinion. Disguised and vague, but emphatic, and interpreted by the fine beam of his eye, it was intoxicating; and when he said subsequently, "Our majority burgundy was good emperor wine, Richie. You approved it? I laid that vintage down to give you a lesson to show you that my plans come safe to maturity,"—I credited him with a large share of foresight, though I well knew his habit of antedating his sagacity, and could not but smile at the illustration of it.

You perceive my state without rendering it necessary for me to label myself.

I saw her next in a pinewood between Ischl and the Traun. I had climbed the steep hill alone, while my father and Mr. Peterborough drove round the carriageroad to the margravine's white villa. Ottilia was leaning on the arm of Baroness Turckems, walking—a miracle that disentangled her cruelly from my net of fancies. The baroness placed a second hand upon her as soon as I was seen standing in the path. Ottilia's face coloured like the cyclamen at her feet.

- "You!" she said.
- "I might ask, is it you, princess?"
- "Some wonder has been worked, you see."
- "I thank heaven."
- "You had a part in it."

- "The poorest possible."
- "Yet I shall presume to call you Doctor Oceanus."
- "Will you repeat his medicine? The yacht awaits you always."
 - "When I am well I study. Do not you?"
 - "I have never studied in my life."
- "Ah, lose no more time! The yacht is delicious idleness, but it is idleness. I am longing for it now, I am still so very weak. My dear Sibley has left me to be married. She marries a Hanoverian officer. We change countries—I mean," the princess caught back her tongue, "she will become German, not compatriot of your ships of war. My English rebukes me. I cease to express... It is like my walking, done half for pride, I think. Baroness, lower me, and let me rest."

The baroness laid her gently on the dry brown pine-heddings, and blew a whistle that hung at her girdle, oy which old Schwartz, kept out of sight to encourage the princess's delusion of pride in her walking, was summoned. Ottilia had fainted. The baroness shot a suspicious glance at me. "It comes of this everlasting English talk," I heard her mutter. She was quick to interpose between me and the form I had once raised and borne indisputably.

"Schwartz is the princess's attendant, sir," she said. "In future, may I request you to talk German?"

The Prince of Eppenwelzen and Prince Otto were shooting in the mountains. The margravine, after conversing with the baroness, received me stiffly. She

seemed eager to be rid of us; was barely hospitalle. My mind was too confused to take much note of words and signs. I made an appointment to meet my father the day following, and walked away and returned at night, encountered Schwartz and fed on the crumbs of tidings I got from him, a good, rough old faithful fellow, far past the age for sympathy, but he had carried Ottilia when she was an infant, and meant to die in her service. I thought him enviable above most creatures. principal anxiety was about my finding sleeping quarters. When he had delivered himself three times over of all that I could lead him to say, I left him still puffing at his pipe. He continued on guard to be in readiness to run for a doctor should one be wanted. Twice in the night I came across his path. The night was quiet. dark blue, and starry; the morning soft and fragrant. The burden of the night was bearable, but that of daylight I fled from, and all day I was like one expecting a crisis. Laughter, with so much to arouse it, hardly had any foothold within me to stir my wits. For if I said "Folly!" I did not feel it, and what I felt I did not understand. My heart and head were positively divided. Days and weeks were spent in reconciling them a little; days passed with a pencil and scribbled slips of paper-the lines written with regular commencements and irregular terminations; you know them. Why had Ottilia fainted? She recommended hard study, thinks me idle, worthless; she has a grave intelligence, a serious estimation of life; she thinks me

intrinsically of the value of a summer fly. But why did she say, "We change countries," and immediately flush, break and falter, lose command of her English, grow pale and swoon; why? With this question my disastrous big heart came thundering up to the closed doors of comprehension. It was unanswerable. "We change countries." That is, she and Miss Sibley change countries, because the Englishwoman marries a German, and the German princess-oh! enormous folly. Pierce it, slay it, trample it under. Is that what the insane heart is big with? Throughout my night-watch I had been free of it, as one who walks meditating in cloisters on a sentence that once issued from divine lips. was no relief, save in those pencilled lines which gave honest laughter a chance, they stood like such a hasty levy of raw recruits raised for war, going through the goose-step, with pretty accurate shoulders, and feet of distracting degrees of extension, enough to craze a rhythmical drill-sergeant. I exulted at the first reading, shuddered at the second, at the third felt desperate, destroyed them and sat staring at vacancy as if I had now lost the power of speech.

At last I flung away idleness and came to a good resolution; and I carried it through. I studied at a famous German University, not far from Hanover. My father, after discussing my project with me from the point of view of amazement, settled himself in the University town, a place of hopeless dulness, where the stones of the streets and the houses seemed to have

got their knotty problem to brood over, and never knew holiday. A fire for acquisition possessed me, and soon an ungovernable scorn for English systems of teaching -sound enough for the producing of gentlemen, and perhaps of merchants; but gentlemen rather bare of graces, and merchants not too scientific in finance. Mr. Peterborough conducted the argument against me until my stout display of facts, or it may have been my insolence, combined with the ponderous pressure of the atmosphere upon one who was not imbibing a counteracting force, drove him on a tour among German cathedrals. Letters from Riversley informed me that my proceedings were approved, though the squire wanted me near him. We offered entertainments to the students on a vast scale. The local newspaper spoke of my father as the great Lord Roy. So it happened that the margravine at Sarkeld heard of us. Returning from a visit to the prince's palace, my father told me that he saw an opportunity for our being useful to the prince, who wanted money to work a newly-discovered coal-mine in his narrow dominions, and he suggested that I might induce the squire to supply it; as a last extremity I could advance the money. Meanwhile he had engaged to accompany the prince in mufti to England to examine into the working of coal-mines, and hire an overseer and workmen to commence operations on the Sarkeld property. It would be obligatory to entertain him fitly in London.

" Certainly," said I.

"During our absence the margravine will do her best to console you, Richie. The prince chafes at his poverty. We give him a display of wealth in England; here we are particularly discreet. We shall be surer of our ground in time. I set Dettermain and Newson at work. I have written for them to hire a furnished mansion for a couple of months, carriages, horses, lacqueys. But over here we must really be-goodness me! I know how hard it is !--we must hold the reins on ourselves tight. Baroness Turckems is a most estimable person on the side of her duty. Why, the Dragon of Wantley sat on its eggs, you may be convinced! She is a praiseworthy dragon. The side she presents to us is horny, and not so agreeable. German when she is on guard. Further I need not counsel a clever old son. Counsel me, Richie. Would it be advisable to run the prince down to Riversley?a Prince!"

- "Oh! decidedly not," was my advice.
- "Well, well," he assented.

I empowered him to sell out Bank stock.

He wrote word from England of a very successful expedition. The prince, travelling under the title of Count Delzenburg, had been suitably entertained, received by Lady Wilts, Serena Marchioness of Edbury, Lady Denewdney, Lady Sampleman, and others. He had visited my grandfather's mine, and that of Miss Penrhys, and was astounded; had said of me that I wanted but a title to be as brilliant a parti as any in Europe.

The margravine must have received orders from her brother to be civil to me; she sent me an imperious invitation from her villa, and for this fruit of my father's displomacy I yielded him up my daintier feelings, my judgment into the bargain.

Snows of early spring were on the pinewood country I had traversed with Temple. Ottilia greeted me in health and vivacity. The margravine led me up to her in the very saloon where Temple, my father, and I had sat after the finale of the statue scene, saying,—

- "Our sea-lieutenant."
- "It delights me to hear he has turned University student," she said; and in English: "You have made friends of your books?"

She was dressed in blue velvet to the throat; the hair was brushed from the temples and bound in a simple knot. Her face and speech, fair and unconstrained, had neither shadow nor beam directed specially for me. I replied,—

- "At least I have been taught to despise idleness."
- "My professor tells me it is strange for any of your countrymen to love books."
 - "We have some good scholars, princess."
- "You have your Bentley and Porson. Oh! I know many of the world's men have grown in England. Who can deny that? What we mean is, your society is not penetrated with learning. But my professor shall dispute with you. Now you are facile in our German you can defend yourself. He is a deep scholar,

broad over tongues and dialects, European, Asiatic—a lion to me, poor little mouse! I am speaking of Herr Professor von Karsteg, lady aunt."

- "Speak intelligibly, and don't drum on my ear with that hybrid language," rejoined the margravine.
- "Hybrid! It is my Herr Professor's word. But English is the choice gathering of languages, and honey is hybrid, unless you condemn the bee to suck at a single flower."
- "Ha! you strain compliments like the poet Fretzel," the margravine exclaimed. "Luckily they're not addressed to human creatures. You will find the villa dull, Herr Harry Richmond. For my part every place is dull to me that your father does not enliven. We receive no company in the prince's absence, so we are utterly cut off from fools; we have simply none about us."
- "The deprivation is one we are immensely sensible of!" said the princess.
- "Laugh on! you will some day be aware of their importance in daily life, Ottilia."

The princess answered: "If I could hate, it would be such persons." A sentence that hung in the memory of one knowing himself to be animated by the wildest genius of folly.

We drove to the statue of Prince Albrecht Wohlgemuth, overlooking leagues of snow-roofed branches. Again Ottilia reverted to Temple,—

"That dear little friend of yours who wandered out

with you to seek your father, and is now a sailor! I cannot forget him. It strikes me as a beautiful piece of the heroism of boys. You both crossed the sea to travel over the whole Continent until you should find him, did you not? What is hard to understand, is your father's not writing to you while he did us the favour to reside at the palace."

- "Roy is a butterfly," said the margravine.
- " "That I cannot think."
- "Roy was busy, he was occupied. I won't have him abused. Besides, one can't be always caressing and cajoling one's pretty brats."
 - "He is an intensely loving father."
- "Very well; establish that, and what does it matter whether he wrote or not? A good reputation is the best vindication."

The princess smiled. "See here, dearest aunty, the two boys passed half the night here, until my Aennchen's father gave them shelter."

"Apparently he passes half or all the night in the open air everywhere," said the margravine.

I glanced hurriedly over both faces. The margravine was snuffing her nostrils up contemptuously. The princess had vividly reddened. Her face was luminous over the nest of white fur folding her neck.

"Yes, I must have the taste for it; for when I was a child," said I, plunging at anything to catch a careless topic, "I was out in my father's arms through a winter night, and I still look back on it as one of the most

delightful I have ever known. I wish I could describe the effect it had on me. A track of blood in the snow could not be brighter."

The margravine repeated,-

"A track of blood in the snow! My good young man, you have excited forms of speech."

I shuddered. Ottilia divined that her burning blush had involved me. Divination is fiery in the season of blushes, and I, too, fell on the track of her fair spirit, setting out from the transparent betrayal by Schwartz of my night-watch in the pine-wood near the Traun riverfalls. My feelings were as if a wave had rolled me helpless to land, at the margravine's mercy should she put another question. She startled us with a loud outburst of laughter.

"No! no man upon this earth but Roy could have sat that horse I don't know how many minutes by the clock, as a figure of bronze," she exclaimed.

Ottilia and I exchanged a grave look. The gentleness of the old time was sweet to us both: but we had the wish that my father's extravagant prominency in it might be forgotten.

At the dinner-table I made the acquaintance of the Herr Professor Dr. Julius von Karsteg, tutor to the princess, a grey, broad-headed man, whose chin remained imbedded in his neckcloth when his eyelids were raised on a speaker. The first impression of him was that he was chiefly neckcloth, coat-collar, grand head, and gruffness. He had not joined the ceremonial step from

the reception to the dining saloon, but had shuffled in from a side-door. No one paid him any deference save the princess. The margravine had the habit of thrumming the table thrice as soon as she heard his voice; nor was I displeased by such an exhibition of impatience, considering that he spoke merely for the purpose of snubbing me. His powers were placed in evidence by her not daring to utter a sarcasm, which was possibly the main cause of her burning fretfulness. I believe there was not a word uttered by me throughout the dinner that escaped him. Nevertheless he did his business of catching and worrying my poor unwary sentences too neatly for me, an admirer of real force and aptitude, to feel vindictive. I behaved to him like a gentleman, as we phrase it, and obtained once an encouraging nod from the margravine. She leaned to me to say that they were accustomed to think themselves lucky if no learned talk came on between the professor and his pupil. The truth was that his residence in Sarkeld was an honour to the prince, and his acceptance of the tutorship a signal condescension, accounted for by his appreciation of the princess's intelligence. was a man distinguished even in Germany for scholarship, rather notorious for his political and social opinions The margravine, with infinite humour in her countenance, informed me that he wished to fit the princess for the dignity of a Doctor of Laws.

"It says much for her that he has not spoilt her manners; her health, you know, he succeeded in almost totally destroying, and he is at it again. The man is, I suspect, at heart arrant Republican. He may teach a girl whatever nonsensical politics he likes—it goes at the lifting of the bridegroom's little finger. We could not permit him to be near a young prince. Alas! we have none."

The professor allowed himself extraordinary liberties with strangers, the guests of the margravine. I met him crossing an inner court next day. He interrupted me in the middle of a commonplace remark, and to this effect:—

"You are either a most fortunate or a most unfortunate young man!"

So profoundly penetrated with thoughtfulness was the tone of his voice that I could not take umbrage. The attempt to analyze his signification cost me an aching forehead, perhaps because I knew it too acutely.

CHAPTER VII.

OTTILIA.

SHE was on horseback, I on foot, Schwartz for sole witness, and a wide space of rolling, silent white country around us.

We had met in the fall of the winter noon by accident.

- "You like my professor?" said Ottilia.
- "I do: I respect him for his learning."
- "You forgive him his irony? It is not meant to be personal to you. England is the object; and partly, I may tell you, it springs from jealousy. You have such wealth! You embrace half the world: you are such a little island! All this is wonderful. The bitterness is, you are such a mindless people—I do but quote to explain my professor's ideas. 'Mindless,' he says, 'and arrogant, and neither in the material nor in the spiritual kingdom of noble or gracious stature, and ceasing to have a brave aspect.' He calls you squat Goths. Can you bear to hear me?"

[&]quot;Princess!"

- "And to his conception, you, who were pioneers when the earth had to be shaped for implements and dug for gold, will turn upon us and stop our march; you are to be overthrown and left behind, there to gain humility from the only teacher you can understand—from poverty. Will you defend yourself?"
- "Well, no, frankly, I will not. The proper defence for a nation is its history."
 - "For an individual?"
 - "For a man, his readiness to abide by his word."
 - "For a woman-what?"
 - "For a princess, her ancestry."
- "Ah! but I spoke of women. There, there is my ground of love for my professor! I meet my equals, princes, princesses, and the man, the woman, is out of them, gone, flown! They are out of the tide of humanity; they are walking titles. 'Now,' says my professor, 'that tide is the blood of our being; the blood is the life-giver; and to be cut off from it is to perish.' Our princely houses he esteems as dead wood. Not near so much say I: yet I hear my equals talk, and I think, 'Oh! my professor, they testify to your wisdom.' I love him because he has given my every sense a face-forward attitude (you will complain of my feebleness of speech) towards exterior existence. There is a princely view of life which is a true one; but it is a false one if it is the sole one. In your Parliament your House of Commons shows us real princes, your Throne merely titled ones. I speak what everybody

knows, and you, I am sure, are astonished to hear me."

- "I am," said I.
- "It is owing to my professor, my mind's father and mother. They say it is the pleasure of low-born people to feel themselves princes; mine it is to share their natural feelings. 'For a princess, her ancestry.' Yes; but for a princess who is no more than princess, her ancestors are a bundle of faggots, and she, with her mind and heart tied fast to them, is, at least a good half of her, dead wood. This is our opinion. May I guess at your thoughts?"
- "It's more than I could dare to do myself, princess!"

How different from the Ottilia I had known, or could have imagined! That was one thought.

- "Out of the number, then, this," she resumed: "you think that your English young ladies have command over their tongues: is it not so?"
 - "There are prattlers among them."
 - "Are they educated strictly?"
- "I know little of them. They seem to me to be educated to conceal their education."
 - "They reject ideas?"
 - "It is uncertain whether they have had the offer."

Ottilia smiled. "Would it be a home in their midst?"

Something moved my soul to lift wings, but the passion sank.

"I questioned you of English ladies," she resumed, because we read your writings of us. Your kindness towards us is that which passes from nurse to infant; your criticism reminds one of pedagogue and urchin. You make us sorry for our manners and habits, if they are so bad; but most of all you are merry at our simplicity. Not only we say what we feel, we display it. Now, I am so German, this offence is especially mine."

I touched her horse's neck, and said, "I have not seen it."

"Yet you understand me. You know me well. How is that?"

The murmur of honest confession came from me: "I have seen it!"

She laughed. "I bring you to be German, you see. Could you forsake your England?"

- "Instantly, though not willingly."
- "Not regrettingly?"
- "Cheerfully, if I had my work and my-my friend."
- "No; but well I know a man's field of labour is his country. You have your ambition."
 - "Yes, now I have."

She struck a fir-branch with her riding-whip, scattering flakes on my head. "Would that extinguish it?"

- "In the form of an avalanche perhaps it would."
- "Then you make your aims a part of your life?"
- " I do."
- "Then you win! or it is written of you that you vol. II. 26

never knew failure! So with me. I set my life upon my aim when I feel that the object is of true worth. I win, or death hides from me my missing it. look to; this obtains my professor's nod, and the approval of my conscience. Worthiness, however!—the mind must be trained to discern it. We can err very easily in youth; and to find ourselves shooting at a false mark uncontrollably must be a cruel thing. I cannot say it is undeserving the scourge of derision. Do you know yourself? I do not; and I am told by my professor that it is the sole subject to which you should not give a close attention. I can believe him. For who beguiles so much as Self? Tell her to play, she plays her sweetest. Lurk to surprise her, and what a serpent she becomes! She is not to be aware that you are watching her. You have to review her acts. observe her methods. Always be above her; then byand-by you catch her hesitating at cross roads; then she is bare: you catch her bewailing or exulting; then she can no longer pretend she is other than she seems. I make self the feminine, for she is the weaker, and the soul has to purify and raise her. On that point my professor and I disagree. Dr. Julius, unlike our modern Germans, esteems women over men, or it is a further stroke of his irony. He does not think your English ladies have heads: of us he is proud as a laurelled poet. Have I talked you dumb?"

"Princess, you have given me matter to think upon."

She shook her head, smiling with closed eyelids.

I, now that speech had been summoned to my lips, could not restrain it, and proceeded, scarcely governing the words, quite without ideas;—"For you to be indifferent to rank—yes, you may well be; you have intellect; you are high above me in both——" So on, against good taste and common sense.

She cried: "Oh! no compliments from you to me. I will receive them, if you please, by deputy. Let my professor hear your immense admiration for his pupil's accomplishments. Hear him then in return! He will beat at me like the rainy west wind on a lily. 'See,' he will say, when I am broken and bespattered, 'she is fair, she is stately, is she not!' And really I feel at the sound of praise, though I like it, that the opposite, satire, condemnation, has its good right to pelt me. Look; there is the tower, there's the statue, and under that line of pine-trees the path we ran up;—'dear English boys!' as I remember saying to myself; and what did you say of me?"

Her hand was hanging loose. I grasped it. She drew a sudden long breath, and murmured, without fretting to disengage herself,—

"My friend, not that!"

Her voice carried an unmistakable command. I kissed the fingers and released them.

"Are you still able to run?" said she, leading with an easy canter, face averted. She put on fresh speed; I was utterly outstripped.

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Had she quitted me in anger? Had she parted from me out of view of the villa windows to make it possible for us to meet accidentally again in the shadow of her old protecting Warhead, as we named him from his appearance, gaunt Schwartz?

CHAPTER VIII.

AN EVENING WITH DR. JULIUS VON KARSTEG.

In my perplexity I thought of the professor's saying: "A most fortunate or a most unfortunate young man." These words began to strike me as having a prophetic depth that I had not fathomed. I felt myself fast becoming bound in every limb, every branch of my soul. Ottilia met me smiling. She moved free as air. She could pursue her studies, and argue and discuss and quote, keep unclouded eyes, and laugh and play, and be her whole living self, unfettered, as if the pressure of my lips on her hand implied nothing. Perhaps for that reason I had her pardon. "My friend, not that!" Her imperishably delicious English rang me awake, and lulled me asleep. Was it not too securely friendly? Or was it not her natural voice to the best beloved. bidding him respect her that they might meet with the sanction of her trained discretion? The professor would invite me to his room after the 'sleep well' of the ladies, and I sat with him much like his pipe-bowl, which burned bright a moment at one sturdy puff, but generally gave out smoke in fantastical wreaths. He told me frankly he had a poor idea of my erudition. My fancifulness he commended as something to be turned to use in writing stories. "Give me time, and I'll do better things," I groaned. He rarely spoke of the princess; with grave affection always when he did. He was evidently observing me comprehensively. The result was beyond my guessing.

One night he asked me what my scheme of life was.

On the point of improvising one of an impressive character, I stopped and confessed: "I have so many that I may say I have none." Expecting reproof, I begged him not to think the worse of me for that.

- "Quite otherwise," said he. "I have never cared to read deliberately in the book you open to me, my good young man."
 - "The book, Herr Professor?"
- "Collect your wits. We will call it Shakspeare's book; or Göthe's, in the minor issues. No, not minor, but a narrower volume. You were about to give me the answer of a hypocrite. Was it not so?"

I admitted it, feeling that it was easily to have been perceived. He was elated.

- "Good. Then I apprehend that you wait for the shifting of a tide to carry you on?"
 - "I try to strengthen my mind."
 - "So I hear," said he, drily.
- "Well, as far as your schools of teaching will allow."

"That is, you read and commit to memory like other young scholars. Whereunto? Have you no aim? You have, or I am told you are to have, fabulous wealth—a dragon's heap. You are one of the main drainpipes of English gold. What is your object? spend it?"

"I shall hope to do good with it."

"To do good! There is hardly a prince or millionaire, in history or alive, who has not in his young days hugged that notion. Pleasure swarms, he has the pick of his market. You English live for pleasure."

"We are the hardest workers in the world."

"That you may live for pleasure! Deny it!"

He puffed his tobacco-smoke zealously, and resumed: "Yes, you work hard for money. You eat and drink, and boast of your exercises; they sharpen your appetites. So goes the round. We strive, we fail; you are our frog-chorus of critics, and you suppose that your brek-ek-koax affects us. I say we strive and fail, but we strive on, while you remain in a past age, and are proud of it. You reproach us with lack of common sense, as if the belly were its seat. Now I ask you whether you have a scheme of life, that I may know whether you are to be another of those huge human pumpkins called rich men, who cover your country and drain its blood and intellect-those impoverishers of nature! Here we have our princes; but they are rulers, they are responsible, they have their tasks, and if they also run to gourds, the scandal punishes them and their order, all in seasonable time. They stand eminent. Do you mark me? They are not a community, and are not—bad enough! bad enough!—but they are not protected by laws in their right to do nothing for what they receive. That system is an invention of the commercial genius and the English."

- "We have our aristocracy, Herr Professor."
- "Your nobles are nothing but rich men inflated with empty traditions of insufferable, because unwarrantable, pride, and drawing substance from alliances with the merchant class. Are they your leaders? Do they lead you in letters? in the arts? ay, or in government? No, not, I am informed, not even in military service! and there our titled witlings do manage to hold up their brainless pates. You are all in one mass struggling in the stream to get out and lie and wallow and belch on the banks. You work so hard that you have all but one aim, and that is fatness and ease!"
- "Pardon me, Herr Professor," I interposed, "I see your drift. Still I think we are the only people on earth who have shown mankind a representation of freedom. And as to our aristocracy, I must, with due deference to you, maintain that it is widely respected."

I could not conceive why he went on worrying me in this manner with his jealous outburst of continental bile.

- "Widely!" he repeated. "It is widely respected; and you respect it: and why do you respect it?"
 - "We have illustrious names in our aristrocracy."
- "We beat you in illustrious names and in the age of the lines, my good young man."
- "But not in a race of nobles who have stood for the country's liberties."
 - "So long as it imperilled their own! Any longer!"
- "Well, they have known how to yield. They have helped to build our Constitution."
- "Reverence their ancestors, then! The worse for such descendants. But you have touched the exact stamp of the English mind:—it is, to accept whatsoever is bequeathed it without inquiry whether there is any change in the matter. Nobles in very fact you would not let them be if they could. Nobles in name, with a remote recommendation to posterity—that suits you!"

He sat himself up to stuff a fresh bowl of tobacco, while he pursued: "Yes, yes; you worship your aristocracy. It is notorious. You have a sort of sagacity. I am not prepared to contest the statement that you have a political instinct. Here it is chiefly social. You worship your so-called aristocracy perforce in order to preserve an ideal of contrast to the vulgarity of the nation."

This was downright insolence.

It was intolerable. I jumped on my feet. "The weapons I would use in reply to such remarks I cannot address to you, Herr Professor. Therefore, excuse me."

He sent out quick spirts of smoke rolling into big volumes. "Nay, my good young Englishman, but on the other hand you have not answered me. And hear me: yes, you have shown us a representation of freedom. True. But you are content with it in a world that moves by computation some considerable sum upwards of sixty thousand miles an hour."

"Not on a fresh journey—a recurring course!" said I.

"Good!" he applauded, and I was flattered.

"I grant you the physical illustration," the Professor continued, and with a warm gaze on me, I thought. "The mind journeys somewhat in that way, and we in our old Germany hold that the mind advances notwithstanding. Astronomers condescending to earthly philosophy may admit that advance in the physical universe is computable, though not perceptible. whither we tend, shell and spirit. You English, fighting your little battles of domestic policy, and sneering at us for flying at higher game,—you unimpressionable English, who won't believe in the existence of aims that don't drop on the ground before your eyes, and squat and stare at you, you assert that man's labour is completed when the poor are kept from crying out. Now my question is, have you a scheme of life consonant with the spirit of modern philosophy—with the views of intelligent, moral, humane human beings of this period? Or are you one of your robust English brotherhood worthy of a Caligula in his prime, lions in gymnastics-for a time; sheep always in the dominions of mind: and all of one pattern, all in a rut! Favour me with an outline of your ideas. Pour them out pell-mell, intelligibly, or not, no matter. I undertake to catch you somewhere. I mean to know you, hark you, rather with your assistance than without it."

We were deep in the night. I had not a single idea ready for delivery. I could have told him that washing was a good thing, excess of tobacco a bad, moderation in speech one of the outward evidences of wisdom: but Ottilia's master in the humanities exacted civility from me.

"Indeed," I said, "I have few thoughts to communicate at present, Herr Professor. My German will fail me as soon as I quit common ground. I love my country, and I do not reckon it as perfect. We are swillers, possibly gluttons; we have a large prosperous middle class; many good men are to be found in it."

His discharges of smoke grew stifling. My advocacy was certainly of a miserable sort.

"Yes, Herr Professor, on my way when a boy to this very place I met a thorough good man."

Here I relate the tale of my encounter with Captain Welsh.

Dr. Julius nodded rapidly for continuations. Further! further!

He refused to dig at the mine within me, and seemed to expect it to unbosom its riches by explosion.

- "Well, Herr Professor, we have conquered India, and hold it as no other people could."
- "Vide the articles in the last file of English newspapers!" said he.
 - "Suppose we boast of it-"
 - "Can you?" he simulated wonderment.
 - "Why, surely it's something!"
- "Something for non-commissioned officers to boast of; not for statesmen. However, say that you are fit to govern Asiatics. Go on."
- "I would endeavour to equalize ranks at home, encourage the growth of ideas——"
- "Supporting a non-celibate clergy, and an intermingled aristocracy? Your endeavours, my good young man, will lessen like those of the man who employed a spade to uproot a rock. It wants blasting. Your married clergy and merchandised aristocracy are coils: they are the ivy about your social tree: you would resemble Laocoon in the throes, if one could imagine you anything of a heroic figure. Forward."

In desperation I exclaimed, "It's useless! I have not thought at all. I have been barely educated. I only know that I do desire with all my heart to know more, to be of some service."

"Now we are at the bottom, then, and it's sound!" said he.

But I cried, "Stay; let me beg you to tell me what you meant by calling me a most fortunate, or a most unfortunate young man."

He chuckled over his pipe-stem, "Aha!"

- "How am I one or the other?"
- "By the weight of what you carry in your head."
 - "How by the weight?"

He shot a keen look at me. "The case, I suspect. is singular, and does not often happen to a youth. You are fortunate if you have a solid and adventurous mind: most unfortunate if you are a mere sensational whipster. There's an explanation that covers the whole. I am as much in the dark as you are. I do not say which of us two has the convex eye."

Protesting that I was unable to read riddles, though the heat of the one in hand made my frame glow, I entreated to have explicit words. He might be in Ottilia's confidence, probing me - why not? Any question he chose to put to me, I said, I was ready to answer.

- "But it's the questioner who unmasks," said he.
- "Are we masked, Herr Professor. I was not aware of it."
 - "Look within, and avoid lying."

He stood up. "My nights," he remarked, "are not commonly wasted in this manner. We Germans use the night for work."

After a struggle to fling myself on his mercy and win his aid or counsel, I took his hand respectfully, and holding it, said, "I am unable to speak out. I would if it involved myself alone."

"Yes, yes, I comprehend; your country breeds honourable men, chivalrous youngsters," he replied. "It's not enough—not enough. I want to see a mental force, energy of brain. If you had that, you might look as high as you liked for the match for it, with my consent. Do you hear? What I won't have is, flat robbery! Mark me, Germany or England, it's one to me if I see vital powers in the field running to a grand career. It's a fine field over there. As well there as here, then! But better here than there if it's to be a wasp's life. Do you understand me?"

I replied, "I think I do, if I may dare to;" and catching breath: "Herr Professor, dear friend, forgive my boldness; grant me time to try me; don't judge of me at once; take me for your pupil—am I presumptuous in asking it?—make of me what you will, what you can; examine me; you may find there's more in me than I or anybody may know. I have thoughts and aims, feeble at present—Good God! nothing for me but a choice of the two-' most unfortunate' seems likeliest. You read at a glance that I had no other choice. Rather the extremes!—I would rather grasp the limits of life and be swung to the pits below, be the most unfortunate of human beings, than never to have aimed at a star. You laugh at me? An Englishman must be horribly in earnest to talk as I do now. But it is a star!" (The image of Ottilia sprang fountain-like into blue night heavens before my eyes memorably.) "She," was my next word. I swallowed

it, and with a burning face, petitioned for help in my studies.

To such sight as I had at that instant he appeared laughing outrageously. It was a composed smile. "Right," he said; "you shall have help in a settled course. Certain professors, friends of mine, at your University, will see you through it. Aim your head at a star—your head!—and even if you miss it you don't fall. It's that light dancer, the gambler, the heart in you, my good [young man, which aims itself at inaccessible heights, and has the fall—somewhat icy to reflect on! Give that organ full play and you may make sure of a handful of dust. Do you hear? It's a mind that wins a mind. That is why I warn you of being most unfortunate if you are a sensational whipster. Good-night. Shut my door fast that I may not have the trouble to rise."

I left him with the warm lamplight falling on his forehead, and books piled and sloped, shut and open; an enviable picture to one in my condition. The peacefulness it indicated made scholarship seem beautiful, attainable, I hoped. I had the sense to tell myself that it would give me unrotting grain, though it should fail of being a practicable road to my bright star; and when I spurned at consolations for failure, I could still delight to think that she shone over these harvests and the reapers.

CHAPTER IX.

A SUMMER STORM, AND LOVE.

The foregoing conversations with Ottilia and her teacher, hard as they were for passion to digest, grew luminous on a relapsing heart. Without apprehending either their exact purport or the characters of the speakers, I was transformed by them from a state of craving to one of intense quietude. I thought neither of winning her, nor of aiming to win her, but of a foothold on the heights she gazed at reverently. And if, sometimes, seeing and hearing her, I thought, Oh, rarest soul! the wish was that brother and sisterhood of spirit might be ours. My other eager, thirstful self I shook off like a thing worn out. Men in my confidence would have supposed me more rational: I was simply possessed.

My desire was to go into harness, buried in books, and for recreation to chase visions of original ideas for benefiting mankind. A clear-witted friend at my elbow, my dear Temple, perhaps, could have hit on the track of all this mental vagueness, but it is doubtful that he would have pushed me out of the strange mood, half

stupor, half the folding-in of passion; it was such magical happiness. Not to be awake, yet vividly sensible; to lie calm and reflect, and only to reflect; be satisfied with each succeeding hour and the privations of the hour, and, as if in the depths of a smooth water, to gather fold over patient fold of the submerged self, safe from wounds: the happiness was not noble, but it breathed and was harmless, and it gave me rest when the alternative was folly and bitterness.

Visitors were coming to the palace to meet the prince, on his return with my father from England. I went back to the University, jealous of the invasion of my ecstatic calm by new faces, and jealous when there of the privileges those new faces would enjoy; and then, how my recent deadness of life cried out against me as worse than a spendthrift, a destroyer! a nerveless absorbent of the bliss showered on me-the light of her morning presence when, just before embracing, she made her obeisance to the margravine, and kindly saluted me, and stooped her forehead for the baroness to kiss it; her gestures and her voice; her figure on horseback, with old Warhead following, and I meeting her but once !- her walk with the professor, listening to his instructions-I used to see them walking up and down the cypress path of the villa garden, her ear given to him wholly as she continued her grave step. and he shuffling and treading out of his line across hers, or on the path-borders, and never apologizing, nor she noticing it. At night she sang, sometimes moun-

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tain ditties to the accompaniment of the zither, leaning on the table and sweeping the wires between snatches of talk. Nothing haunted me so much as those tones of her zither, which were little louder than summer gnats when fireflies are at their brightest and storm impends.

My father brought horses from England, and a couple of English grooms, and so busy an air of cheerfulness that I had, like a sick invalid, to beg him to keep away from me and prolong unlimitedly his visit to Sarkeld; the rather so, as he said he had now become indispensable to the prince besides the margravine. "Only, no more bronze statues!" I adjured him. He nodded. He had hired Count Fretzel's château, in the immediate neighbourhood, and was absolutely independent, he said. His lawyers were busy procuring evidence. He had impressed Prince Ernest with a due appreciation of the wealth of a young English gentleman by taking him over my grandfather's mine.

"And, Richie, we have advanced him a trifle of thousands towards the working of this coal discovery of his. In six weeks our schooner yacht will be in the Elbe to offer him entertainment. He graciously deigns to accept a couple of English hunters at our hands; we shall improve his breed of horses, I suspect. Now, Richie, have I done well? I flatter myself I have been attentive to your interests, have I not?"

He hung waiting for confidential communications on my part, but did not press for them; he preserved an unvarying delicacy in that respect.

- "You have nothing to tell?" he asked.
- "Nothing," I said. "I have only to thank you."

He left me. At no other period of our lives were we so disunited. I felt in myself the reverse of everything I perceived in him, and such letters as I wrote to the squire consequently had a homelier tone. It seems that I wrote of the pleasures of simple living-of living for learning's sake. Mr. Peterborough at the same time despatched praises of my sobriety of behaviour and diligent studiousness, confessing that I began to outstrip him in some of the higher branches. The squire's brief reply breathed satisfaction, but too evidently on the point where he had been led to misconceive the state of affairs. "He wanted to have me near him, as did another person whom I appeared to be forgetting; he granted me another year's leave of absence, bidding me bluffly not to be a bookworm and forget I was an Englishman." The idea that I was deceiving him never entered my mind.

I was deceiving everybody, myself in the bargain, as a man must do when in chase of a woman above him in rank. The chase necessitates deceit—who knows? chicanery of a sort as well; it brings inevitable humiliations; such that ever since the commencement of it at speed I could barely think of my father with comfort, and rarely met him with pleasure. With what manner of face could I go before the prince or the margravine, and say, I am an English commoner, the son of a man of doubtful birth, and I claim the hand of the princess?

What contortions were not in store for these features of mine! Even as affairs stood now, could I make a confidant of Temple and let him see me through the stages of the adventure? My jingling of verses, my fretting about the signification of flowers, and trifling with symbols, haunted me excruciatingly, taunting me with I know not what abject vileness of spirit.

In the midst of these tortures an arrow struck me, in the shape of an anonymous letter, containing one brief line: "The princess is in need of help."

I threw my books aside, and repaired to Count Fretzel's château, from which, happily, my father was absent; but the countenance of the princess gave me no encouragement to dream I could be of help to her; yet a second unsigned note worded in a quaint blunt manner, insisted that it was to me she looked. I chanced to hear the margravine, addressing Baroness Turckems, say: "The princess's betrothal," what further escaped me. Soon after, I heard that Prince Otto was a visitor at the lake-palace. My unknown correspondent plied me a third time.

I pasted the scrap in my neglected book of notes and reflections, where it had ample space and about equal lucidity. It drew me to the book, nearly driving me desperate; I was now credulous of anything, except that the princess cared for help from me. I resolved to go home; I had no longer any zeal for study. The desolation of the picture of England in my mind grew congenial. It became imperative that I should go some-

where, for news arrived of my father's approach with a French company of actors, and deafening entertainments were at hand. On the whole, I thought it decent to finish my course at the University, if I had not quite lost the power of getting into the heart of books. One who studies is not being a fool: that is an established truth. I thanked Dr. Julius for planting it among my recollections. The bone and marrow of study form the surest antidote to the madness of that light gambler, the heart, and distasteful as books were, I had gained the habit of sitting down to them, which was as good as an instinct towards the right medicine, if it would but work.

On an afternoon of great heat I rode out for a gaze at the lake-palace, that I chose to fancy might be the last, foreseeing the possibility of one of my fits of movement coming on me before sunset. My very pulses throbbed "away!" Transferring the sense of overwhelming heat to my moral condition, I thought it the despair of silliness to stay baking in that stagnant place, where the sky did nothing but shine, gave nothing forth. The sky was bronze, a vast furnace dome. The folds of light and shadow everywhere were satin-rich; shadows perforce of blackness had light in them, and the light a sword-like sharpness over their edges. It was inanimate radiance. The laurels sparkled as with frost-points; the denser foliage drooped burning brown: a sickly saint'sring was round the heads of the pines. That afternoon the bee hummed of thunder, and refreshed the ear.

I pitied the horse I rode, and the dog at his heels, but for me the intensity was inspiriting. Nothing lay in the light, I had the land to myself. "What hurts me?" I thought. My physical pride was up, and I looked on the cattle in black corners of the fields, and here and there a man tumbled anyhow, a wreck of limbs, out of the insupportable glare, with an even glance. Not an eye was lifted on me.

I saw nothing that moved until a boat shot out of the bight of sultry lake-water, lying close below the dark promontory where I had drawn rein. The rower was old Schwartz Warhead. How my gorge rose at the impartial brute! He was rowing the princess and a young man in uniform across the lake.

That they should cross from unsheltered paths to close covert was reasonable conduct at a time when the vertical rays of the sun were fiery arrow-heads. As soon as they were swallowed in the gloom I sprang in my saddle with torture, transfixed by one of the coarsest shafts of hideous jealousy. Off I flew, tearing through dry underwood, and round the bend of the lake, determined to confront her, wave the man aside, and have my last word with the false woman. Of the real Ottilia I had lost conception. Blood was inflamed, brain bare of vision: "He takes her hand, she jumps from the boat; he keeps her hands, she feigns to withdraw it, all woman to him in her eyes: they pass out of sight." A groan burst from me. I strained my crazy imagination to catch a view of them under cover of the wood

and torture myself trebly, but it was now blank, shut fast. Sitting bolt upright, panting on horseback in the yellow green of one of the open woodways, I saw the young officer raise a branch of chestnut and come out. He walked moodily up to within a yard of my horse, looked up at me, and with an angry stare that grew to be one of astonishment, said,—"Ah? I think I have had the pleasure—somewhere? in Würtemberg, if I recollect."

It was Prince Otto. I dismounted. He stood alone. The spontaneous question on my lips would have been "Where is she?" but I was unable to speak a word.

- "English?" he said, patting the horse's neck.
- "Yes—the horse? an English hunter. How are you, Prince Otto? Do you like the look of him?
- "Immensely. You know we have a passion for English thoroughbreds. Pardon me, you look as if you had been close on a sunstroke. Do you generally take rides in this weather?"
- "I was out by chance. If you like him, pray take him; take him. Mount him and try him. He is yours if you care to have him; and if he doesn't suit you send him up to Count Fretzel's. I've had riding enough in the light."
- "Perhaps you have," said he, and hesitated. "It's difficult to resist the offer of such a horse. If you want to dispose of him, mention it when we meet again. Shall I try him? I have a slight inclination to go as hard as you have been going, but he shall have good

grooming in the prince's stables, and that's less than half as near again as Count Fretzel's place; and a horse like this ought not to be out in this weather, if you will permit me the remark."

"No: I'm ashamed of bringing him out, and shan't look on him with satisfaction," said I. "Take him and try him, and then take him from me, if you don't mind."

"Do you know, I would advise your lying down in the shade awhile?" he observed, solicitously. "I have seen men on the march in Hungary and Italy. An hour's rest under cover would have saved them."

I thanked him.

"Ice is the thing!" he ejaculated. "I'll ride and have some fetched to you. Rest here."

With visible pleasure he swung to the saddle. I saw him fix his cavalry thighs and bound off as if he meant to take a gate. Had he glanced behind him he would have fancied that the sun had done its worst. I ran at full speed down the footpath, mad to think she might have returned homeward by the lake. The two had parted—why? He this way, she that. They would not have parted but for a division of the will. I came on the empty boat. Schwartz lay near it beneath heavy boughs, smoking and perspiring in peace. Neither of us spoke. And it was now tempered by a fit of alarm that I renewed my search. So when I beheld her, intense gratitude broke my passion; when I touched her hand it was trembling for absolute assurance of her safety. She was leaning against a tree, gazing on the ground, a white figure in that iron-moted gloom.

"Otto!" she cried, shrinking from the touch; but at sight of me, all softly as a sight in the heavens, her face melted in a suffusion of wavering smiles, and deep colour shot over them, heavenly to see. She pressed her bosom while I spoke:—a lover's speech, breathless.

"You love me?" she said.

My fingers tightened on her wrist,-

- "You have known it!"
- "Yes, yes!"
- "Forgiven me? Speak, princess."
- "Call me by my name."
- "My own soul! Ottilia!"

She disengaged her arms tenderly.

"I have known it by my knowledge of myself," she said, breathing with her lips dissevered. "My weakness has come upon me. Yes, I love you. It is spoken. It is too true. Is it a fate that brings us together when I have just lost my little remaining strength—all power? You hear me! I pretend to wisdom, and talk of fate!"

She tried to laugh in scorn of herself, and looked at me with almost a bitter smile on her features, made beautiful by her soft eyes. I feared from the helpless hanging of her underlip that she would swoon; a shudder convulsed her; and at the same time I became aware of the blotting out of sunlight, and a strange bowing and shore-like noising of the forest.

"I think I am going to cry like a girl. One cannot see one's pride die like this, without—— but it is not anguish of any kind. Since we are here together, I would have no other change."

She spoke till the tears came thick.

I told her of the letters I had received, warning me of a trouble besetting her. They were, perhaps, the excuse for my conduct, if I had any.

Schwartz burst on us with his drill-sergeant's shout for the princess. Standing grey in big rain-drops he was an object of curiosity to us both. He came to take her orders.

"The thunder," he announced, raising a telegraphic arm, rolls. It rains. We have a storm. Command me, princess! your highness!"

Ottilia's eyelids were set blinking by one look aloft. Rain and lightning filled heaven and earth.

"Direct us, you!" she said to me gently.

The natural proposition was to despatch her giant by the direct way down the lake to fetch a carriage from the stables, or matting from the boathouse. I mentioned it, but did not press it.

She meditated an instant. "I believe I may stay with my beloved?"

Schwartz and I ran to the boat, hauled it on land, and set it keel upwards against a low leafy dripping branch. To this place of shelter, protecting her as securely as I could, I led the princess, while Schwartz

happed a rough trench around it with one of the sculls. We started him on foot to do the best thing possible; for the storm gave no promise that it was a passing one. In truth, I knew that I should have been the emissary and he the guard; but the storm overhead was not fuller of its mighty burden than I of mine. I looked on her as mine for the hour, and well won.

CHAPTER X.

PRINCESS OTTILIA'S LETTER.

That hour of tempest went swift as one of its flashes over our little nest of peace where we crouched like insects. The lightning and the deluge seemed gloriously endless. Ottilia's harbouring nook was dry within an inch of rushing floods and pattered mire. On me the torrents descended, and her gentle efforts drew me to her side, as with a maternal claim to protect me, or to perish in my arms if the lightning found us. We had for prospect an ever-outbursting flame of foliage, and the hubbub of the hissing lake, crimson, purple, dusky grey, like the face of a passionate creature scourged. It was useless to speak. Her lips were shut, but I had the intent kindness of her eyes on me almost unceasingly.

The good hour slipped away. Old Warhead's splashed knees on the level of our heads were seen by us when the thunder had abated. Ottilia prepared to rise.

"You shall hear from me," she said, bending with

brows measuring the boat-roof, like a bird about to fly.

- "Shall I see you?"
- "Ultimately you surely will. Ah! still be patient."
- "Am I not? have I not been?"
- "Yes; and can you regret it?"
- "No; but we separate!"
- "Would you have us be two feet high for ever?" she answered smiling.
- "One foot high, or under earth, if it might be together!"
 - "Poor little gnomes!" said she.

The homeliness of our resting-place arrested her for an instant, and perhaps a touch of comic pity for things of such diminutive size as to see nothing but knees where a man stood. Our heads were hidden.

- "Adieu! no pledge is needed," she said tenderly.
- "None!" I replied, and gained it by abnegation.

She returned to the upper world with a burning blush.

Schwartz had borne himself with extraordinary discretion by forbearing to spread alarm at the palace. He saluted his young mistress in the regulation manner while receiving her beneath a vast umbrella, the holiday peasant's invariable companion in these parts. A forester was in attendance carrying shawls, clogs, and matting. The boat was turned and launched.

"Adieu, Harry Richmond. Will you be quite patient till you hear from me?" said Ottilia, and added, "It is my question!" delightfully recalling old times.

I was soon gazing at the track of the boat in rough water.

Shouts were being raised somewhere about the forest. and were replied to by hearty bellow of the rower's lungs. She was now at liberty to join my name to her own or not, as she willed. I had to wait. But how much richer was I than all the world! The future owed me nothing. I would have registered a vow to ask nothing of it. Among the many determined purposes framing which I walked home, was one to obtain a grant of that bit of land where we had sat together, and build a temple The fear that it might be trodden by feet of men before I had enclosed it beset me with anguish. The most absolute pain I suffered sprang from a bewildering incapacity to conjure up a vision of Ottilia free of the glittering accessories of her high birth; and that was the pain of shame; but it came only at intervals, when pride stood too loftily and the shadow of possible mischance threatened it with the axe.

She did not condemn me to long waiting. Her favourite Aennchen brought me her first letter. The girl's face beamed, and had a look as if she commended me for a worthy deed.

- "An answer, Aennchen?" I asked her.
- "Yes, yes!" said she anxiously; "but it will take more time than I can spare." She appointed a meeting near the palace garden-gates at night.

I chose a roof of limes to read under.

"Noblest and best beloved!" the princess addressed me in her own tongue, doubting, I perceived, as her training had taught her, that my English eyes would tolerate apostrophes of open-hearted affection. The rest was her English confided to a critic who would have good reason to be merciful:—

"The night has come that writes the chapter of the day. My father has had his interview with his head-forester to learn what has befallen from the storm in the forest. All has not been told him! That shall not be delayed beyond to-morrow.

"I am hurried to it. And I had the thought that it hung perhaps at the very end of my life among the coloured leaves, the strokes of sunset-that then it would be known! or if earlier, distant from this strange imperative Now. But we have our personal freedom now, and I have learnt from minutes what I did mean to seek from years, and from our forest what I hoped that change of scene, travel, experience, would teach me. Yet I was right in my intention. It was a discreet and a just meaning I had. For things will not go smoothly for him at once: he will have his hard battle. He is proved: he has passed his most brave ordeal. But Shall I see him put to it and not certainly know Even thus I reasoned. One cannot study without knowing that our human nature is most frail. Daily the body changes, daily the mind—why not the heart? I did design to travel and converse with various persons.

"Pardon it to one who knew that she would require superfeminine power of decision to resolve that she would dispose of herself!

"I heard of Harry Richmond before I saw him. My curiosity to behold the two fair boys of the sailor kingdom set me whipping my pony after them that day so remote, which is always vesterday. My thoughts followed you, and I wondered-does he mean to be a distinguished countryman of his Nelson? or a man of learning? Then many an argument with 'my professor,' until-for so it will ever be-the weaker creature did succumb in the open controversy, and thought her thoughts to herself. Contempt of England gained on me still. But when I lay withered, though so young, by the sea-shore, his country's ancient grandeur insisted, and I dreamed of Harry Richmond, imagining that I had been false to my childhood. You stood before me, dearest. You were kind: you were strong, and had a gentle voice. Our souls were caught together on the Do you recollect my slip in the speaking of Lucy Sibley's marriage?—'We change countries.' At that moment I smelt salt air, which would bring you to my sight and touch were you and I divided let me not think how far.

"To-morrow I tell the prince, my father, that I am a plighted woman. Then for us the struggle, for him the grief. I have to look on him and deal it.

"I can refer him to Dr. Julius for my estimate of my husband's worth.

"'My professor' was won by it. He once did incline to be the young bold Englishman's enemy. 'Why is he here? what seeks he among us?' It was his jealousy, not of the man, but of the nation, which would send one to break and bear away his carefully cultivated German lily. No eye but his did read me through. And you endured the trial that was forced on you. You made no claim for recompence when it was over. No, there is no pure love but strong love! It belongs to our original elements, and of its purity should never be question, only of its strength.

"I could not help you when you were put under scrutiny before the margravine and the baroness. Help from me would have been the betrayal of both. The world has accurate eyes, if they are not very penetrating. The world will see a want of balance immediately, and also too true a balance, but it will not detect a depth of concord between two souls that do not show some fretfulness on the surface.

"So it was considered that in refusing my cousin Otto and other proposed alliances, I was heart-free. An instructed princess, they thought, was of the woeful species of woman. You left us: I lost you. I heard you praised for civil indifference to me—the one great quality you do not possess! Then it was the fancy of people that I, being very cold, might be suffered to hear my cousin plead for himself. The majority of our you. II.

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family favour Otto. He was permitted to woo me as though I had been a simple maid; and henceforth shall I have pity for all poor little feminine things who are so persecuted, asked to inflict cruelty—to take a sword and strike with it. But I-who look on marriage as more than a surrender-I could well withstand surpassing eloquence. It was easy to me to be inflexible in speech and will when I stood there, entreated to change myself. But when came magically the other, who is my heart, my voice, my mate, the half of me, and broke into illumination of things long hidden-oh! then did I say to you that it was my weakness had come upon me? It was my last outcry of self-the 'I' expiring. I am now yours, 'We' has long overshadowed 'I,' and now engulphs it. We are one. If it were new to me to find myself interrogating the mind of my beloved, relying on his courage, taking many proofs of his devotion, I might pause to re-peruse my words here, without scruple, written. I sign it, before heaven, your Ottilia.

"OTTILIA FREDERIKA WILHELMINA HEDWIG,
"Princess of Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld."

CHAPTER XI.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PRINCE ERNEST AND A MEETING WITH PRINCE OTTO.

A MESSENGER from Prince Ernest commanding my immediate attendance at the palace signified that the battle had begun. I could have waited for my father, whose return from one of his expeditions in the prince's service, was expected every instant; but though I knew I should have had a powerful coadjutor in him to assist me through such a conference, I preferred to go down alone. Prince Otto met me in the hall. He passed by, glancing an eye sharply, and said over his shoulder,—

"We shall have a word together presently!"

The library door was flung open. Prince Ernest and the margravine were in the room. She walked out with angry majesty. The prince held his figure in the stiff attitude of reception. He could look imposing.

The character of the interview was perceptible at once.

"Be seated," he said.

I bowed my head, and sat—a disadvantageous thing

to do before an irritated man, erect and prepared to put harsh questions. My deliberate method of obeying him served for a reminder of what was due from him to me in courtesy, and he placed a chair in front of me, but could not persuade himself to occupy it immediately.

"You have not, I presume, to be informed of the business in hand, Mr. Richmond!"

"Your highness, I believe I can guess it." This started him pacing the floor.

"An impossibility! a monstrous extravagance! a thing unheard of! mania! mania!" he muttered. "You are aware, sir, that you have being doing your worst to destroy the settled arrangements of my family? What does it mean? In common reason you cannot indulge any legitimate hope of succeeding. Taking you as a foreigner, you must know that. Judge of the case by your own reigning Families. Such events never happen amongst them. Do you suppose that the possession of immense wealth entitles you to the immeasurable presumption of aspiring to equality of position with reigning Houses? Such folly is more frequently castigated than reasoned with. Why, now-now, were it published that I had condescended—condescend as I am doing, I should be the laughing-stock of every Court in Europe. You English want many lessons. are taught by your scribes to despise the dignity which is not supported by a multitude of bayonets, guns, and gold. I heard of it when I travelled incognito. You make merry over little potentates. Good. But do not cross their paths. Their dominion may be circumscribed, but they have it; and where we are now, my power equals that of the Kaiser and the Czar. You will do me the favour to understand that I am not boasting, not menacing; I attempt, since it is extraordinarily imposed on me, to instruct you. I have cause to be offended; I waive it. I meet you on common ground, and address myself to your good sense. Have you anything to say?"

I rose. "Much, sir."

"Then, pray be seated."

He set me the example, repeating "Much?"

From the excitement he was quite unable to conceal it was evident to me that the princess had done her part bravely and fully. I could not suffer myself to be beaten down.

" Much?" he said again, with affected incredulity.

The painful hardship for me was to reply in the vague terms he had been pleased to use.

- "I have much to say, your highness. First, to ask pardon of you, without excusing myself."
- "A condition, apparently, that absolves the necessity for the grant. Speak precisely."

But I was as careful as he in abstaining from any direct indication of his daughter's complicity, and said, "I have offended your highness. You have done me the honour to suggest that it is owing to my English training. You will credit my assurance that the offence was not intentional, not preconceived."

- "You charge it upon your having been trained among a nation of shopkeepers?"
- "My countrymen are not illiterate or unmannerly, your highness."
- "I have not spoken it; I may add, I do not think it."
- "I feared that your highness entertained what I find to be a very general, perhaps here and there wilful, error with regard to England."
- "When I was in the service I had a comrade, a gallant gentleman, deeply beloved by me, and he was an Englishman. He died in the uniform and under the flag I reverence."
- "I rejoice that your highness has had this experience of us. I have to imagine that I expressed myself badly. My English training certainly does not preclude the respect due to exalted rank. Your highness will, I trust humbly, pardon my offence. I do not excuse myself because I cannot withdraw, and I am incapable of saying that I regret it."
- "In cool blood you utter that?" exclaimed the prince.

His amazement was unfeigned.

"What are the impossible, monstrous ideas you?

——where ——? Who leads you to fancy there is one earthly chance for you when you say you cannot withdraw? Cannot? Are you requested? Are you consulted? It is a question to be decided in the imperative: you must. What wheel it is you think you

have sufficient vigour to stop I am profoundly unaware, but I am prepared to affirm that it is not the wheel of my household. I would declare it, were I a plain citizen. You are a nullity in the case in point of your individual will—a nullity swept away with one wave of the hand. You can do this, and nothing else: you can apologize, recognize your station, repair a degree of mischief that I will not say was preconceived or plotted. So for awhile pursue your studies, your travels. In time it will give me pleasure to receive you. Mr. Richmond," he added, smiling, and rising; "even the head of a little German principality has to give numberless audiences." His features took a more cordial smile to convince me that the dismissing sentence was merely playful.

As for me, my mind was confused by the visible fact that the father's features resembled the daughter's. I mention it that my mind's condition may be understood.

Hardly had I been bowed out of the room when my father embraced me, and some minutes later I heard Prince Otto talking to me and demanding answers. That he or any one else should have hostile sentiments towards a poor devil like me seemed strange. My gift of the horse appeared to anger him most. I reached the château without once looking back, a dispirited wretch. I shut myself up; I tried to read. The singular brevity of my interview with the prince, from which I had expected great if not favourable issues, affected

me as though I had been struck by a cannon-shot; my brains were nowhere. His perfect courtesy was confounding. I was tormented by the delusion that I had behaved pusillanimously.

My father rushed up to me after dark. Embracing me and holding me by the hand, he congratulated me with his whole heart. The desire of his life was accomplished; the thing he had plotted for ages had come to pass. He praised me infinitely. My glorious future, he said, was to carry a princess to England and sit among the highest there, the husband of a lady peerless in beauty and in birth, who, in addition to what she was able to do for me by way of elevation in my country, could ennoble in her own territory. I had the option of being the father of English nobles or of German princes; so forth. I did not like the strain; yet I clung to him. I was compelled to ask whether he had news of any sort worth hearing.

"None," said he calmly; "none. I have everything to hear, nothing to relate; and, happily, I can hardly speak for joy." He wept.

He guaranteed to have the margravine at the château within a week, which seemed to me a sufficient miracle. The prince, he said, might require three months of discretionary treatment. Three further months to bring the family round, and the princess would be mine. "But she is yours! she is yours already!" he cried authoritatively. "She is the reigning intellect there. I dreaded her very intellect would

give us all the trouble, and behold, it is our ally! The prince lives with an elbow out of his income. But for me, it would be other parts of his person as well, I assure you, and the world would see such a princely tatterdemalion as would astonish it. Money to him is important. He must_carry on his mine. He can carry on nothing without my help. By the way, we have to deal out cheques?"

I assented.

In spite of myself, I caught the contagion of his exuberant happiness, and faith in his genius. prince had applauded his energetic management of the affairs of the mine two or three times in my hearing. It struck me that he had really found his vocation, and would turn the sneer on those who had called him volatile and reckless. This led me to a luxurious sense of dependence on him, and I was willing to live on dreaming and amused, though all around me seemed phantoms, especially the French troupe, the flower of the Parisian stage: Regnault, Carigny, Desbarolles, Mesdames Blanche Bignet and Dupertuy, and Mdlle. Jenny Chassediane, the most spirituelle of French-"They are a part of our enginery, Richie," women. They proved to be an irresistible my father said. attraction to the margravine. She sent word to my father that she meant to come on a particular day when, as she evidently knew, I should not be present. or three hours later I had Prince Otto's cartel in my Jorian DeWitt, our guest at this season, told hands.

me subsequently, and with the utmost seriousness, that I was largely indebted to Mdlle. Jenny for a touching French song of a beau chevalier she sang before Ottilia in my absence. Both he and my father believed in the efficacy of this kind of enginery, but as the case happened the beau chevalier was down low enough at the moment his high-born lady listened to the song.

It appeared that when Prince Otto met me after my interview with Prince Ernest, he did his best to provoke a rencontre, and failing to get anything but a nod from my stunned head, betook himself to my University. friendly young fellow there, Eckart vom Hof, offered to fight him on my behalf, should I think proper to refuse. Eckart and two or three others made a spirited stand against the aristocratic party siding with Prince Otto, whose case was that I had played him a dishonourable trick to laugh at him. I had, in truth, persuaded him to relieve me at once of horse and rival at the moment when he was suffering the tortures of a rejection, and I was rushing to take the hand he coveted; I was so far guilty. But to how great a degree guiltless, how could I possibly explain to the satisfaction of an angry man? I had the vision of him leaping on the horse, while I perused his challenge; saw him fix to the saddle and smile hard, and away to do me of all services the last he would have performed wittingly. The situation was exactly of a sort for one of his German fantasy-writers to image the forest jeering at him as he flew, blind, deaf, and unreasonable, vehement for one fierce draught of speed. We are all dogged by the humour of following events when we start on a wind of passion. I could almost fancy myself an accomplice, I realised the scene with such intensity in the light running at his heels: it may be quite true that I laughed in the hearing of his messenger as I folded up the letter. That was the man's report. I am not commonly one to be forgetful of due observances. If I did laugh it was involuntarily.

The prospect of the possible eternal separation from my beloved pricked my mechanical wits and set them tracing the consequent line by which I had been brought to this pass as to a natural result. Had not my father succeeded in inspiring the idea that I was something more than something? The tendency of young men is to conceive it for themselves without assistance; a prolonged puff from the breath of another is nearly sure to make them mad as kings, and not so pardonably.

I see that I might have acted wisely, and did not; but that is a speculation taken apart from my capabilities. If a man's fate were as a forbidden fruit, detached from him, and in front of him, he might hesitate fortunately before plucking it; but, as most of us are aware, the vital half of it lies in the seed-paths he has traversed. We are sons of yesterday, not of the morning. The past is our mortal mother, no dead thing. Our future constantly reflects her to the soul. Nor is it ever the new man of to-day which grasps his fortune, good or ill. We are pushed to it by the hundreds of days we have buried, eager ghosts. And if you have not the habit of

taking counsel with them, you are but an instrument in their hands.

My English tongue admonishes me that I have fallen upon a tone resembling one who uplifts the finger of piety in a salon of conversation. A man's review of the course of his life grows for a moment stringently serious when he beholds the stream first broadening perchance under the light interpenetrating mine just now.

My seconds were young Eckart vom Hof, and the barely much older, though already famous Gregorius Bandelmeyer, a noted mathematician, a savage Republican, lean-faced, spectacled, and long, soft-fingered, a cat to look at, a tiger to touch. Both of them were animated by detestation of the Imperial uniform. distrusted my skill in the management of the weapon I had chosen; for reasons of their own they carried a case of pistols to the field. Prince Otto was attended by Count Loepel and a Major Edelsheim of his army, fresh from the garrison fortress of Mainz, gentlemen perfectly conversant with the laws of the game, which my worthy comrades were not. Several minutes were spent in an altercation between Edelsheim and Bandelmeyer. The major might have had an affair of his own had he My feelings were concentrated within the pleased. immediate ring where I stood; I can compare them only to those of a gambler determined to throw his largest stake and abide the issue. I was not open to any distinct impression of the surrounding scenery; the

hills and leafage seemed to wear an iron aspect. My darling, my saint's face was shut up in my heart, and with it a little inaudible cry of love and pain. The prince declined to listen to apologies. "He meant to teach me that this was not a laughing matter." Major Edelsheim had misunderstood Bandelmeyer; no offer of an apology had been made. A momentary human sensation of an unworthy sort beset me when I saw them standing together again, and contrasted the collectedness and good-humour of my adversary's representative with the vexatious and unnecessary naggling of mine, the sight of whose yard-long pipe scandalized me.

At last the practical word was given. The prince did not reply to my salute. He was smoking, and kept his cigar in one corner of his mouth, as if he were a master fencer bidding his pupil to come on. He assumed that he had to do with a bourgeois Briton unused to arms, such as we are generally held to be on the Continent. After feeling my wrist for a while he shook the cigar out of his teeth.

The 'cliquetis' of the crossed steel must be very distant in memory, and yourself in a most dilettante frame of mind, for you to be accessible to the music of that thin skeleton's clank. Nevertheless it is better and finer even at the time of action, than the abominable hollow ogre's eye of the pistol-muzzle. We exchanged passes, the prince chiefly attacking. Of all things to strike my thoughts, can you credit me that the vividest

was the picture of the old woman Temple and I had seen in our boyhood on the night of the fire dropping askew, like forks of brown flame, from the burning house in London city! I must have smiled. The prince cried out in French: "Laugh, sir; you shall have it!" He had nothing but his impetuosity for an assurance of his promise, and was never able to force me back beyond a foot. I touched him on the arm and the shoulder, and finally pierced his arm above the elbow. I could have done nearly what I liked with him; his skill was that of a common regimental sabreur.

"Ludere qui nescit campestribus abstinet armis!" Bandelmeyer sung out.

"You observed?" said Major Edelsheim, and received another disconcerting discharge of a Latin line. The prince frowned and made use of some military slang. Was his honour now satisfied? Not a whit. He certainly could not have kept his sword-point straight, and yet he clamoured to fight on, stamped, and summoned me to assault him, proposed to fight me with his left hand after his right had failed; in short, he was beside himself, an example of the predicament of a man who has given all the provocation and finds himself disabled. My seconds could have stopped it had they been equal to their duties; instead of which Bandelmeyer, hearing what he deemed an insult to the order of student and scholar, retorted furiously and offensively, and Eckart, out of good-fellowship, joined

him. Thereat Major Edelsheim, in the act of bandaging the prince's arm, warned them that he could not pass by an outrage on his uniform. Count Loepel stept politely forward, and gave Eckart a significant bow. The latter remarked mockingly, "With pleasure and condescension!" At a murmur of the name of doctor from Edelsheim, the prince damned the doctor until he or I were food for him. Irritated by the whole scene, and his extravagant vindictiveness, in which light I regarded the cloak of fury he had flung over the shame of his defeat, I called to Bandelmeyer to open his case of pistols and offer them for a settlement. As the proposal came from me it was found acceptable. The major remonstrated with the prince, and expressed to me his regrets and et cæteras of well-meant civility. He had a hard task to keep out of the hands of Bandelmeyer, who had seized my sword, and wanted vi et armis to defend the cause of Learning and the People against military brigands on the spot. If I had not fallen we should have had one or two other prostrate bodies. I walked my part of the twenty-five paces' interval at a quick step, showing a parade front, irresolute about employing the disgusting little instrument I had in my clutch at all. Suddenly I felt a shock as of ice-cold water upon heated lungs. I remember staring at Bandelmeyer's spectacles and nodding like a bulrush. Eckart caught me. "Give it him off the ground," he cried in a frenzy. "You have a shot! a shot! a shot!" screamed Bandelmeyer, jumping. I could

plainly see Prince Otto standing ready to receive my fire. I looked up, and was invited by the swimming branch of a tree to take aim in that direction. Down came the sky. I made several attempts to speak for the purpose of telling Bandelmeyer that it was foolish of him in the open air to smoke a pipe half as long as himself, but nothing seemed to matter much.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT CAME OF A SHILLING.

OTTO'S bullet found its way right through me, as harmless as a comet in our atmosphere—the most considerate The surgeon, who attended us both, loudly of intruders. admired our mutual delicacy in sparing arteries and vital organs; but a bullet cuts a rougher pathway than the neat steel blade, and I was still prostrate when the prince came to press my hand on his departure for his quarters at Laibach. The utterly unreasonable nature of a duel was manifested by his declaring to me that he was now satisfied I did not mean to insult him and then laugh at him. We must regard it rather as a sudorific for feverish blood and brains. I felt my wound acutely, seeing his brisk step when he retired. Having overthrown me bodily, it threw my heart back to its first emotions, and I yearned to set eyes on my father, with a haunting sense that I had of late injured him and owed him reparation. It vanished after he had been in my room an hour, to return when he had quitted it, and incessantly and inexplicably it went and VOL. II. 29

came in this manner. He was depressed. I longed for drollery, relieved only by chance allusions to my beloved one, whereas he could not conceal his wish to turn the stupid duel to account.

"Pencil a line to her," he entreated me, and dictated his idea of a moving line, adding urgently that the crippled letters would be affecting to her, as to the Great Frederick his last review of his invalid veterans. "Your name—the signature of your name alone, darling Richie," and he traced a crooked scrawl with a forefinger,—"Still, dearest angel, in contempt of death and blood, I am yours to eternity, Harry Lepel Richmond, sometime called Roy—a point for your decision in the future, should the breath everlastingly devoted to the most celestial of her sex, continue to animate the frame that would rise on wings to say adieu! adieu!"—Richie, just a sentence?"

He was distracting.

His natural tenderness and neatness of hand qualified him for spreading peace in a sick room; but he was too full of life and his scheme, and knowing me out of danger, he could not forbear giving his despondency an outlet. I heard him exclaim in big sighs: "Heavens! how near!" and again, "She must hear of it!" by-and-by. "But the means?" Never was a man so incorrigibly dramatic.

He would walk up to a bookcase and take down a volume, when the interjectional fit waxed violent, flip the pages, affecting a perplexity he would assuredly have been struck by had he perused them, and read, as he did once,—"Italy, the land of the sun! and she is to be hurried away there, and we are left to groan. The conspiracy is infamous! One of the Family takes it upon himself to murder us! and she is to be hurried out of hearing! And so we are to have the blood of the Roys spilt for nothing?—no!" and he shut up the book with a report, and bounded to my side to beg pardon of me. From his particular abuse of the margravine, the iteration of certain phrases, which he uttered to denounce and defy them, I gathered that an interview had passed between the two, and that she had notified a blockade against all letters addressed to the princess. He half admitted having rushed to the palace on his road to me.

"But, Richie," said he, pressing me again to write the moving line, "a letter with a broad black border addressed by me might pass." He looked mournfully astute. "The margravine might say to herself,—'Here's Doctor Death in full diploma come to cure the wench of her infatuation.' I am but quoting the coarse old woman, Richie; confusion on her and me! for I like her. It might pass in my handwriting, with a smudge for paternal grief—it might. 'To Her Serene Highness the Margravine of Rippau, &c. &c. &c., in trust for the Most Exalted the Princess of Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld.' I transpose or omit a title or so. 'Aha!' says she, 'there's verwirrung in Roy's poor head, poor fellow; the boy has sunk to a certainty. Here (to the princess),

it seems, my dear, this is for you. Pray do not communicate the contents for a day or so or a month."

His imitation of the margravine was the pleasantest thing I heard from him. The princess's maid and confidante, he regretted to state, was incorruptible, which I knew. That line of Ottilia's writing, "Violets are over," read by me in view of the root-mountain of the Royal House of Princes, scoffed at me insufferably whenever my father showed me these openings of his mind, until I was dragged down to think almost that I had not loved the woman and noble soul, but only the glorified princess—the carved gilt frame instead of the divine portrait! a shameful acrid suspicion, ransacking my conscience with the thrusting in of a foul torch here and there. For why had I shunned him of late? How was it that he tortured me now? Did I in no degree participate in the poignant savour of his scheme? Such questionings set me flushing in deadly chills. My brain was weak, my heart exhausted, my body seemed truthful perforce and confessed on the rack. I could not deny that I had partly, insensibly clung to the vain glitter of hereditary distinction, my father's pitfall; taking it for a substantial foothold, when a young man of wit and sensibility and, mark you, true pride, would have made it his first care to trample that under heel. Excellent is pride; but oh! be sure of its foundations before you go on building monument high. I know nothing to equal the anguish of an examination of the basis of one's pride that discovers it not solidly

fixed; an imposing, self-imposing structure, piled upon empty cellarage. It will inevitably, like a tree striking bad soil, betray itself at the top with time. And the anguish I speak of will be the sole healthy sign about you. Whether in the middle of life it is advisable to descend the pedestal altogether, I dare not say. Few take the precaution to build a flight of steps inside—it is not a labour to be proud of; fewer like to let themselves down in the public eye-it amounts to a castigation; you must, I fear, remain up there, and accept your chance in toppling over. But in any case, delude yourself as you please, your lofty baldness will assuredly be seen with time. Meanwhile, you cannot escape the internal intimations of your unsoundness. A man's pride is the front and head-piece of his character, his soul's support or snare. Look to it in youth. I have to thank the interminable hours on my wretched sick-bed for a singularly beneficial investigation of the ledger of my deeds and omissions and moral Perhaps it has already struck you that one who takes the trouble to sit and write his history for as large a world as he can obtain, and shape his style to harmonize with every development of his nature, can no longer have much of the hard grain of pride in him. A proud puppet-showman blowing into Pandæan pipes is an inconceivable object, except to those who judge of characteristics from posture.

It began to be observed by others that my father was not the most comforting of nurses to me. My

landlady brought a young girl up to my room, and introduced her under the name of Lieschen, saying that she had for a long time been interested in me, and had been diligent in calling to inquire for news of my condition. Commanded to speak for herself, this Lieschen coloured and said demurely, "I am in service here, sir, among good-hearted people, who will give me liberty to watch by you for three hours of the afternoon and three of the early part of the night, if you will honour me."

My father took her shoulder between finger and thumb, and slightly shook her to each ejaculation of his emphatic "No! no! no! no! What! a young maiden nurse to a convalescent young gentleman? Why, goodness gracious me! Eh?"

She looked at me softly, and I said I wished her to come.

My father appealed to the sagacity of the matron. So jealous was he of a suggested partner in his task that he had refused my earnest requests to have Mr. Peterborough to share the hours of watching by my side. The visits of college friends and acquaintances were cut very short, he soon reduced them to talk in a hush with thumbs and nods and eyebrows, and if it had not been so annoying to me, I could have laughed at his method of accustoming the regular visitors to make ready, immediately after greeting, for his affectionate dismissal of them. Lieschen went away with the mute blessing of his finger on one of her modest

dimples; but, to his amazement, she returned in the evening. He gave her a lecture, to which she listened attentively, and came again in the morning. He was petrified. "Idiots, insects, women, and the salt sea ocean!" said he, to indicate a list of the untameables, without distressing the one present, and, acknowledging himself beaten, he ruefully accepted his holiday.

The girl was like sweet Spring in my room. She spoke of Sarkeld familiarly. She was born in that neighbourhood, she informed me, and had been educated by a dear great lady. Her smile of pleasure on entering the room one morning, and seeing me dressed and sitting in a grandfatherly chair by the breezy window, was like a salutation of returning health. My father made another stand against the usurper of his privileges; he refused to go out.

"Then must I go," said Lieschen, "for two are not allowed here."

"No! don't leave me," I begged of her, and stretched out my hands for hers, while she gazed sadly from the doorway. He suspected some foolishness or he was actually jealous. "Hum—oh!" he went forth with a murmured groan.

She deceived me by taking her seat in perfect repose.

After smoothing her apron, "Now I must go," she said.

"What! to leave me here alone?"



She looked at the clock, and leaned out of the window.

"Not alone; oh, not alone!" the girl exclaimed.
"And please, please do not mention me—presently.
Hark! do you hear wheels? Your heart must not beat.
Now farewell. You will not be alone: at least, so I think.
See what I wear, dear Mr. Patient!" She drew from her bosom, attached to a piece of blue ribbon, the half of an English shilling, kissed it, and blew a soft farewell to me.

She had not been long gone when the Princess Ottilia stood in her place.

A shilling tossed by an English boy to a couple of little foreign girls in a woodman's hut !--you would not expect it to withstand the common fate of silver coins, and preserve mysterious virtues by living celibate, neither multiplying nor reduced, ultimately to play the part of a powerful magician in bringing the boy grown man to the feet of an illustrious lady, and her to his side in sickness, treasonably to the laws of her station. The little women quarrelled over it, and snatched and hid and contemplated it in secret, each in her turn, until the strife it engendered was put an end to by a doughty smith, their mother's brother, who divided it into equal halves, through which he drove a hole, and the pieces being now thrown out of the currency, each one wore her share of it in her bosom from that time. proudly appeared. They were not ordinary peasant children, and happily for them they had another friend that was not a bird of passage, and was endowed by nature and position to do the work of an angel. She had them educated to read, write, and knit, and learn pretty manners, and in good season she took one of the sisters to wait on her own person. The second went, upon her recommendation, into the household of a professor of a neighbouring University. But neither of them abjured her superstitious belief in the proved merits of the talisman she wore. So when they saw the careless giver again they remembered him; their gratitude was as fresh as on that romantic morning of their childhood, and they resolved without concert to serve him after their own fashion, and quickly spied a way to it. Remember that they were German girls.

You are now enabled to guess more than was known to Ottilia and me of the curious agency at work to shuffle us together. The doors of her suite in the palace were barred against letters addressed to the princess; the delivery of letters to her was interdicted, she consenting, yet she found one: it lay on the broad walk of the orange-trees, between the pleasure and the fruit-gardens, as if dropped by a falcon in mid air. Ottilia beheld it, and started. Her little maid walking close by, exclaimed, scuttling round in front of her the while like an urchin in sabots, "Ha! what is it? a snake? let me! let me!" The guileless mistress replied, "A letter!" Whereupon the maid said, "Not a window near! and no wall neither! Why, dearest

princess, we have walked up and down here a dozen times and not seen it staring at us! Oh, my good heaven!" The letter was seized and opened, and Ottilia read:

"He who loves you with his heart has been cruelly used. They have shot him. He is not dead. He must not die. He is where he has studied since long. He has his medicine and doctors, and they say the bullet did not lodge. He has not the sight that cures. Now is he, the strong young man, laid helpless at anybody's mercy."

She supped at her father's table, and amused the margravine and him alternately with cards and a sonata. Before twelve at midnight she was driving on the road to the University, saying farewell to what her mind reverenced, so that her lover might but have sight of her. She imagined I had been assassinated. For a long time, and most pertinaciously, this idea dwelt with her. I could not dispossess her of it, even after uttering the word "duel" I know not how often. I had flatly to relate the whole of the circumstances.

"But Otto is no assassin," she cried out.

What was that she reverenced? It was what she jeopardised—her state, her rank, her dignity as princess and daughter of an ancient house, things typical to her of sovereign duties, and the high seclusion of her name. To her the escapades of foolish damsels were abominable. The laws of society as well as of her exalted station were in harmony with her intelligence. She thought

them good, but obeyed them as a subject, not slavishly: she claimed the right to exercise her trained reason. The modestest, humblest, sweetest of women, undervaluing nothing that she possessed, least of all what was due from her to others, she could go whithersoever her reason directed her, putting anything aside to act justly according to her light. Nor would she have had cause to repent had I been the man she held me to be. Even with me she had not behaved precipitately. My course of probation was severe and long before she allowed her heart to speak. My devotion and qualities of mind were not tested by herself only. It was not because she thought lightly of the treasure, but highly of the vessel that she embarked in it. And how much she had prepared herself to cast away I had still to learn.

Pale from a sleepless night and her heart's weariful eagerness to be near me, she sat by my chair, holding my hand, and sometimes looking into my eyes to find the life reflecting hers as in a sunken well that has once been a spring. My books and poor bachelor comforts caught her attention betweenwhiles. We talked of the day of storm by the lake; we read the unsigned letter. With her hand in mine I slept some minutes, and awoke grasping it, doubting and terrified, so great a wave of life lifted me up.

"No! you are not gone," I sighed.

The nature of the step she had taken began to dawn on me.

[&]quot;Only come," said she.

- "But when they miss you at the palace? Prince Ernest?"
- "Hush! they have missed me already. It is done." She said it smiling.
 - "Ottilia, will he take you away?"
 - "Us, dear, us."
 - "Can you meet his anger?"
- "Our aunt will be the executioner. We have a day of sweet hours before she can arrive."
 - "May I see her first?"
 - "We will both see her as we are now."
- "We must have prompt answers for the margravine!"
 - "None, Harry. I do not defend myself ever."

Distant hills, and folds of receding clouds and skies beyond them, were visible from my window, and beyond the skies I felt her soul.

- "Ottilia, you were going to Italy?"
- "Yes; or whither they pleased, for as long as they pleased. I wished once to go, I have told you why. One of the series" (she touched the letter lying on a reading-table beside her) "turned the channel of all wishes and intentions. My friends left me to fall at the mercy of this one. I consented to the injunction that I should neither write nor receive letters. Do I argue ill in saying that a trust was implied? Surely it was a breach of the trust to keep me ignorant of the danger of him I love! Now they know it. I dared not consult them—not my dear father!—about any design of mine

when I had read this odd copybook writing, all in brief sentences, each beginning 'he' and 'he.' It struck me like thrusts of a sword; it illuminated me like lightning. That 'he' was the heart within my heart. The writer must be some clever woman or simple friend, who feels for us very strongly. My lover assassinated, where could I be but with him?"

Her little Ann coming in with chocolate and strips of fine white bread to dip in it stopped my efforts to explain the distinction between an assassination and a duel. I noticed then the likeness of Aennchen to Lieschen.

"She has a sister here," said Ottilia; "and let her bring Lieschen to visit me here this afternoon."

Aennchen, in a burning blush, murmured, that she heard and would obey. I had a memorable pleasure in watching my beloved eat and drink under my roof.

The duel remained incomprehensible to her. She first frightened me by remarking that duels were the pastime of brainless young men. Her next remark, in answer to my repeated attempts to shield my antagonist from a capital charge: "But only military men and Frenchmen fight duels!" accompanied by a slightly investigating glance of timid surprise, gave me pain, together with a flashing apprehension of what she had forfeited, whom offended, to rush to the succour of a duellist. I had to repeat to her who my enemy was, so that there should be no further mention of assassi-

nation. Prince Otto's name seemed to entangle her understanding completely.

"Otto! Otto!" she murmured; "he has, I have heard, been obliged by some so-called laws of honour once or twice to—to—he is above suspicion of treachery! To my mind it is one and the same, but I would not harshly exclude the view the world puts on things; and I use the world's language in saying that he could not do a dishonourable deed. How far he honours himself is a question apart. That may be low enough, while the world is full of man's praises."

She knew the nature of a duel. "It is the work of soulless creatures!" she broke through my stammered explanations with unwonted impatience, and pressing my hand: "Ah! You are safe. I have you still. Do you know, Harry, I am not yet able to endure accidents and misadventures: I have not fortitude to meet them, or intelligence to account for them. They are little ironical laughter. Say we build so high: the lightning strikes us:—why build at all? The summer fly is happier. If I had lost you! I can almost imagine that I should have asked for revenge. For why should the bravest and purest soul of my worship be snatched away? I am not talking wisdom, only my shaken self will speak just now! I pardon Otto though he has behaved basely."

"No, not basely," I felt bound to plead on his behalf, thinking, in spite of a veritable anguish of gathering dread, that she had become enlightened and would soon take the common view of our case; "not basely. He was excessively irritated, without cause in my opinion; he simply misunderstood certain matters. Dearest, you have nations fighting: a war is only an exaggerated form of duelling."

"Nations at war are wild beasts," she replied. "The passions of these hordes of men are not an example for a living soul. Our souls grow up to the light: we must keep eye on the light, and look no lower. Nations appear to me to have no worse than a soiled mirror of themselves in mobs. They are still uncivilized: they still bear a resemblance to the old monsters of the mud. Do you not see their claws and fangs, Harry? Do you find an apology in their acts for intemperate conduct? Men who fight duels appear in my sight no nobler than the first desperate creatures spelling the cruel A B C of the passions."

"No, nor in mine," I assented hastily. "We are not perfect. But hear me. Yes! the passions are cruel. Circumstances however——I mean, there are social usages——Ay! if one were always looking up. But should we not be gentle with our comparisons if we would have our views in proportion?"

She hung studiously silent, and I pursued:

"I trust you so much as my helper and my friend that I tell you what we do not usually tell to women—the facts, and the names connected with them. Sooner or later you would have learnt everything. Beloved, I

do not wait to let you hear it by degrees, to be reconciled to it piecemeal."

- "And I forgive him," she sighed. "I scarcely bring myself to believe that Harry has bled from Otto's hand."
- "It was the accident of the case, Ottilia. We had to meet."
 - "To meet?"
- "There are circumstances when men will not accept apologies; they——we——heaven knows, I was ready to do all that a man could do to avoid this folly—wickedness; give it the worst of titles!"
- "It did not occur—accidentally?" she inquired. Her voice sounded strange, half withheld in the utterance.
- "It occurred," said I, feeling my strength ebb and despair set in, "it occurred—the prince compelled me to meet him."
 - "But my cousin Otto is no assassin?"
- "Compelled, I say: that is, he conceived I had injured him, and left me no other way of making amends."

Her defence of Otto was in reality the vehement cherishing of her idea of me. This caused her bewilderment, and like a barrier to the flowing of her mind it resisted and resisted. She could not suffer herself to realize that I was one of the brainless young savages, creatures with claws and fangs.

Her face was unchanged to me. The homeliness

of her large mild eyes embraced me unshadowed, and took me to its inner fire unreservedly. Leaning towards her in my roomy chair, I contemplated her at leisure while my heart kept saying "Mine! mine!" to awaken an active belief in its possession. Her face was like the quiet morning of a winter day when cloud and sun intermix and make an ardent silver, with lights of blue and faint fresh rose: and over them the beautiful fold of her full evebrow on the eyelid like a bending upper heaven. Those winter mornings are divine. move on noiselessly. The earth is still as if awaiting. A wren warbles, and flits through the lank drenched brambles; hill-side opens green; elsewhere is mist, everywhere expectancy. They bear the veiled sun like a sangreal aloft to the wavy marble flooring of stainless cloud.

She was as fair. Gazing across her shoulder's gentle depression, I could have desired to have the couchant brow, and round cheek, and rounding chin no more than a young man's dream of women, a picture alive, without the animating individual awful mind to judge of me by my acts. I chafed at the thought that one so young and lovely should meditate on human affairs at all. She was of an age to be maidenly romantic: our situation favoured it. But she turned to me, and I was glad of the eyes I knew. She kissed me on the forehead.

" Sleep," she whispered.

I feigned sleep to catch my happiness about me.

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Some disenchanting thunder was coming, I was sure, and I was right. My father entered.

"Princess!" He did amazed and delighted homage, and forthwith uncontrollably poured out the history of my heroism, a hundred words for one;—my promptitude in picking the prince's glove up on my sword's point, my fine play with the steel, my scornful magnanimity, the admiration of my fellow-students;—every line of it; in stupendous language; an artillery celebration of victory. I tried to stop him. Ottilia rose, continually assenting, with short affirmatives, to his glorifying interrogations—a method he had of recapitulating the main points. She glanced to right and left, as if she felt caged.

"Is it known?" I heard her ask, in the half audible strange voice which had previously made me tremble.

"Known? I certify to you, princess,"—the unhappy man spouted his withering fountain of interjections over us anew; known in every Court and garrison of Germany! Known by this time in Old England! And what was more, the correct version of it was known! It was known that the young Englishman had vanquished his adversary with the small sword, and had allowed him, because he had raged demoniacally on account of his lamed limb, to have a shot in revenge.

"The honour done me by the princess in visiting me is not to be known," I summoned energy enough to say.

She shook her head.

My father pledged himself to the hottest secresy, equivalent to a calm denial of the fact, if necessary.

" Pray, be at no trouble," she addressed him.

The 'Where am I?' look was painful in her aspect.

It led me to perceive the difference of her published position in visiting a duellist lover instead of one assassinated. In the latter case, the rashness of an hereditary virgin princess avowing her attachment might pass condoned or cloaked by general compassion. How stood it in the former? I had dragged her down to the duellist's level! And as she was not of a nature to practise concealments, and scorned to sanction them, she was condemned, seeing that concealment as far as possible was imperative, to suffer bitterly in her own esteem. This, the cruellest, was the least of the evils. To keep our names disjoined I fear was hopeless. My weakened frame and mental misery coined tears when thoughts were needed.

Presently I found the room empty of our poor unconscious tormentor. Ottilia had fastened her hand to mine again.

"Be generous," I surprised her by saying. "Go back at once. I have seen you! Let my father escort you on the road. You will meet the margravine, or some one. I think, with you, it will be the margravine, and my father puts her in good humour. Pardon a wretched little scheme to save you from annoyance! So thus you return within a day, and the margravine shelters you. Your name will not be spoken. But

go at once, for the sake of Prince Ernest. I have hurt him already; help me to avoid doing him a mortal injury. It was Schwartz who drove you? Our old Schwartz! old Warhead! You see, we may be safe; only every fresh minute adds to the danger. And another reason for going—another—"

- "Ah!" she breathed, "my Harry will talk himself into a fever."
 - "I shall have it if the margravine comes here."
 - " She shall not be admitted."
- "Or if I hear her, or hear that she has come! Consent at once, and revive me. Oh, good God! I am begging you to leave me, and wishing it with all my soul. Think over what I have done. Do not write to me. I shall see the compulsion of mere kindness between the lines. You consent. Your wisdom I never doubt—I doubt my own."
- "When it is yours you would persuade me to confide in?" said she, with some sorrowful archness.

Wits clear as hers could see that I had advised well, except in proposing my father for escort. It was evidently better that she should go as she came.

I refrained from asking her what she thought of me now. Suing for immediate pardon would have been like the applying of a lancet to a vein for blood: it would have burst forth, meaning mere words coloured by commiseration, kindness, desperate affection, anything but her soul's survey of herself and me; and though I yearned for the comfort passion could give me,

I knew the mind I was dealing with, or, rather, I knew I was dealing with a mind; and I kept my tongue silent. The talk between us was of the possible date of my recovery, the hour of her return to the palace, the writer of the unsigned letters, books we had read apart or peeped into together. She was a little quicker in speech, less meditative. My sensitive watchfulness caught no other indication of a change.

My father drove away an hour in advance of the princess to encounter the margravine.

"By," said he, rehearsing his exclamation of astonishment and delight at meeting her, "the most miraculous piece of good fortune conceivable, dear madam. And now comes the question, since you have condescended to notice a solitary atom of your acquaintance on the public high-road, whether I am to have the honour of doubling the freight of your carriage, or you will deign to embark in mine? But the direction of the horses' heads must be reversed, absolutely it must, if your highness would repose in a bed to-night. Good. So. And now, at a conversational trot, we may happen to be overtaken by acquaintances."

I had no doubt of his drawing on his rarely-abandoned seven-league boots of jargon, once so delicious to me, for the margravine's entertainment. His lack of discernment in treating the princess to it ruined my patience.

The sisters Aennchen and Lieschen presented themselves a few minutes before his departure. Lieschen dropped at her feet.

- "My child," said the princess, quite maternally, "could you be quit of your service with the Mährlens for two weeks, think you, to do duty here?"
- "The professor grants her six hours out of the twenty-four already," said I.
 - "To go where?" she asked, alarmed.
 - "To come here."
- "Here? She knows you? She did not curtsey to you."
 - "Nurses do not usually do that."

The appearance of both girls was pitiable; but having no suspicion of the cause for it, I superadded,—

- "She was here this morning."
- "Ah! we owe her more than we were aware of."

The princess looked on her kindly, though with suspense in the expression.

- "She told me of my approaching visitor," I said.
- . "Oh! not told!" Lieschen burst out.
- "Did you,"—the princess questioned her, and murmured to me, "These children cannot speak falsehoods,"—they shone miserably under the burden of uprightness—"did you make sure that I should come?"

Lieschen thought—she supposed. But why? Why did she think and suppose? What made her anticipate the princess's arrival? This inveterate why communicated its terrors to Aennchen, upon whom the princess turned scrutinizing eyes, saying,—"You write of me to your sister?"

"Yes, princess."

"And she to you?"

Lieschen answered: "Forgive me, your highness, dearest lady!"

- "You offered yourself here unasked?"
- "Yes, princess."
- "Have you written to others besides your sister?"
- "Seldom, princess; I do not remember."
- "You know the obligation of signatures to letters?"
- " Ah!"
- "You have been remiss in not writing to me, child."
- "Oh, princess! I did not dare to."
- "You have not written to me?"
- "Ah! princess, how dared I?"
- "Are you speaking truthfully?"

The unhappy girls stood trembling. Ottilia spared them the leap into the gulfs of confession. Her intuitive glance, assisted by a combination of minor facts, had read the story of their misdeeds in a minute. She sent them down to the carriage, suffering her culprits to kiss her fingers, while she said to one: "This might be a fable of a pair of mice."

When she was gone, after many fits of musing, the signification of it was revealed to my slower brain. I felt that it could not but be an additional shock to the regal pride of such a woman that these little maidens should have been permitted to act forcibly on her destiny. The mystery of the letters was easily explained as soon as a direct suspicion fell on one of the girls who lived in my neighbourhood and the other who was near

the princess's person. Doubtless the revelation of their effective mouse plot had its humiliating bitterness for her on a day of heavy oppression, smile at it as she subsequently might. The torture of heart with which I twisted the meaning of her words about the pair of mice to imply that the pair had conspired to make a net for an eagle and had enmeshed her, may have struck a vein of the truth. I could see no other antithesis to the laudable performance of the single mouse of fable. Lieschen, when she next appeared in the character of nurse, met my inquiries by supplicating me to imitate her sister's generous mistress, and be merciful.

She remarked by-and-by, of her own accord: "Princess Ottilia does not regret that she had us educated."

A tender warmth crept round me in thinking that a mind thus lofty would surely be, however severe in its insight, above regrets and recantations. Ş

CHAPTER XIII.

I GAIN A PERCEPTION OF PRINCELY STATE.

I HAD a visit from Prince Ernest, nominally one of congratulation on my escape. I was never in my life so much at any man's mercy: he might have fevered me to death with reproaches, and I expected them on hearing his name pronounced at the door. I had forgotten the ways of the world. For some minutes I listened guardedly to his affable talk. My thanks for the honour done me were awkward, as if they came The prince was particularly civil and upon reflection. cheerful. His relative, he said, had written of me in high terms-the very highest, declaring that I was blameless in the matter, and that, though he had sent the horse back to my stables, he fully believed in the fine qualities of the animal, and acknowledged his fault in making it a cause of provocation. To all which I assented with easy nods.

"Your Shakspeare, I think," said the prince, "has a scene of young Frenchmen praising their horses. I myself am no stranger to the enthusiasm: one could

not stake life and honour on a nobler brute. Pardon me if I state my opinion that you young Englishmen of to-day are sometimes rather overbearing in your assumption of a superior knowledge of horseflesh. We Germans in the Baltic provinces and in the Austrian cavalry think we have a right to a remark or two; and if we have not suborned the testimony of modern history, the value of our Hanoverian troopers is not unknown to one at least of your generals. However, the odds are that you were right and Otto wrong, and he certainly put himself in the wrong to defend his ground."

I begged him to pass a lenient sentence upon fiery youth. He assured me that he remembered his own. Our interchange of courtesies was cordially commonplace: we walked, as it were, arm-in-arm on thin ice, rivalling one another's gentlemanly composure. Satisfied with my discretion, the prince invited me to the lake-palace, and then a week's shooting in Styria to recruit. I thanked him in as clear a voice as I could command: "Your highness, the mine flourishes, I trust?"

"It does; I think I may say it does," he replied. "There is always the want of capital. What can be accomplished, in the present state of affairs, your father performs, on the whole, well. You smile—but I mean extraordinarily well. He has, with an accountant at his elbow, really the genius of management. He serves me busily, and, I repeat, well. A better employment for him than the direction of Court theatricals?"

"Undoubtedly it is."

"Or than bestriding a bronze horse, personifying my good ancestor! Are you acquainted with the Chancellor von Redwitz?"

"All I know of him, sir, is that he is fortunate to enjoy the particular confidence of his master."

"He has a long head. But, now, he is a disappointing man in action; responsibility overturns him. He is the reverse of Roy, whose advice I do not take, though I'm glad to set him running. Von Redwitz is in the town. He shall call on you, and amuse an hour or so of your convalescence."

I confessed that I began to feel longings for society. Prince Ernest was kind enough to quit me without unmasking. I had not to learn that the simplest visits and observations of ruling princes signify more than lies on the surface. Interests so highly personal as theirs demand from them a decent insincerity.

Chancellor von Redwitz called on me, and amused me with secret anecdotes of all the royal houses of Germany, amusing chiefly through the veneration he still entertained for them. The grave senior was doing his utmost to divert one of my years. The immoralities of blue blood, like the amours of the gods, were to his mind tolerable, if not beneficial to mankind, and he presumed I should find them toothsome. Nay, he besought me to coincide in his excuses of a widely charming young archduchess, for whom no estimable husband of a fitting rank could anywhere be discovered, so she had to be bestowed upon an archducal imbecile;

and hence—and hence—Oh, certainly! Generous youth and benevolent age joined hands of exoneration over her. The Princess of Satteberg actually married, under covert, a colonel of Uhlans at the age of seventeen; the marriage was quashed, the colonel vanished, the princess became the scandalous Duchess of Ilm-Ilm. and was surprised one infamous night in the outer court of the castle by a soldier on guard, who dragged her into the guard-room and unveiled her there, and would have been summarily shot for his pains but for the locket on his breast, which proved him to be his sovereign's son.—A perfect romance, Mr. Chancellor. We will say the soldier son loved a delicate young countess in attendance on the duchess. The countess spies the locket, takes it to the duchess, is reprimanded, when behold! the locket opens, and Colonel von Bein appears as in his blooming youth, in Lancer uniform.-Young sir, your piece of romance has exaggerated history to caricature. Romances are the destruction of human The moment you begin to move the individuals, they are puppets. "Nothing but poetry, and I say it who do not read it "-(Chancellor von Redwitz is the speaker)-"nothing but poetry makes romances passable: for poetry is the everlastingly and embracingly human. Without it your fictions are flat foolishness, non-nourishing substance—a species of brandy and gruel!-diet for craving stomachs that can support nothing solider, and must have the weak stuff stiffened. Talking of poetry, there was an independent hereditary princess of Leiterstein in love with a poet !—a Leonora d'Este!—This was no Tasso. Nevertheless, she proposed to come to nuptials. *Good*, you observe? I confine myself to the relation of historical circumstances; in other words, facts; and of good or bad I know not."

Chancellor von Redwitz smoothed the black silk stocking of his crossed leg, and set his bunch of seals and watch-key swinging. He resumed, entirely to amuse me,—

"The Princess Elizabeth of Leiterstein promised all the qualities which the most solicitous of paternal princes could desire as a guarantee for the judicious government of the territory to be bequeathed to her at his demise. But, as there is no romance to be extracted from her story, I may as well tell you at once that she did not espouse the poet."

"On the contrary, dear Mr. Chancellor, I am interested in the princess. Proceed, and be as minute as you please."

"It is but a commonplace excerpt of secret historical narrative buried among the archives of the Family, my good Mr. Richmond. The Princess Elizabeth thoughtlessly pledged her hand to the young sonneteer. Of course, she could not fulfil her engagement."

"Why not?"

"You see, you are impatient for romance, young gentleman."

- "Not at all, Mr. Chancellor. I do but ask a question."
- "You fence. Your question was dictated by impatience."
 - "Yes, for the facts and elucidations."
- "For the romance, that is. You wish me to depict emotions."

Hereupon this destroyer of temper embrowned his nostrils with snuff, adding,—"I am unable to."

- "Then one is not to learn why the princess could not fulfil her engagement?"
- "Judged from the point of view of the pretender to the supreme honour of the splendid alliance, the fault was none of hers. She overlooked his humble, his peculiarly dubious, birth."
 - "Her father interposed?"
 - " No."
 - "The Family?"
 - "Quite inefficacious to arrest her determinations."
 - "What then—what was in her way?"
 - "Germany."
 - " What?"
- "Great Germany, young gentleman. I should have premised that, besides mental, she had eminent moral dispositions,—I might term it the conscience of her illustrious rank. She would have raised the poet to equal rank beside her had she possessed the power. She could and did defy the Family, and subdue her worshipping father, the most noble prince, to a form of

paralysis of acquiescence—if I make myself understood. But she was unsuccessful in her application for the sanction of the Diet."

. "The Diet?"

"The German Diet. Have you not lived among us long enough to know that the German Diet is the seat of domestic legislation for the princely houses of Germany? A prince or a princess may say, 'I will this or that.' The Diet says, 'Thou shalt not;' preeminently, 'Thou shalt not mix thy blood with that of an impure race, nor with blood of inferiors.' Hence, we have it what we see it, a translucent flood down from the topmost founts of time. So we revere it. 'Quâ man and woman,' the Diet says, by implication, 'do as you like, marry in the ditches, spawn plentifully. Quâ prince and princess, No! Your nuptials are nought. Or would you maintain them a legal ceremony, and be bound by them, you descend, you go forth; you are no reigning sovereign, you are a private person.' His Serene Highness the prince was thus prohibited from affording help to his daughter. The princess was reduced to the decision either that she, the sole child born of him in legal wedlock, would render him quâ prince childless, or that she would—in short, would have her woman's way. The sovereignty of Leiterstein continued uninterruptedly with the elder branch. She was a true princess."

"A true woman," said I, thinking the sneer weighty.

The Chancellor begged me to recollect that he had warned me there was no romance to be expected.

I bowed; and bowed during the remainder of the interview.

Chancellor von Redwitz had performed his mission. The hours of my convalescence were furnished with food for amusement sufficient to sustain a year's blockade; I had no further longing for society, but I craved for fresh air intensely.

Did Ottilia know that this iron law, enforced with the might of a whole empire, environed her, held her fast from any motion of heart and will? I could not get to mind that the prince had hinted at the existence of such a law. Yet why should he have done so? The word impossible, in which he had not been sparing when he deigned to speak distinctly, comprised everything. More profitable than shooting empty questions at the sky was the speculation on his project in receiving me at the palace, and that was dark. My father, who might now have helped me, was off on duty again.

I found myself driving into Sarkeld with a sense of a whirlwind round my head; wheels in multitudes were spinning inside, striking sparks for thoughts. I met an orderly in hussar uniform of blue and silver, trotting on his errand. There he was; and whether many were behind him or he stood for the army in its might, he wore the trappings of an old princely House that nestled proudly in the bosom of its great, jealous Fatherland.

Previously in Sarkeld I had noticed members of the diminutive army to smile down on them. I saw the princely arms and colours on various houses and in the windows of shops. Emblems of a small State, they belonged to the history of the Empire. The Courtphysician passed with a bit of ribbon in his button-hole. A lady driving in an open carriage encouraged me to salute her. She was the wife of the Prince's Minister of Justice. Upon what foundation had I been building? A reflection of the ideas possessing me showed Riversley, my undecorated home of rough red brick, in the middle of barren heaths. I entered the palace, I sent my respects to the prince. In return, the hour of dinner was ceremoniously named to me: ceremony damped the air. I had been insensible to it before, or so I thought, the weight was now so crushing. Arms, emblems, colours, liveries, portraits of princes and princesses of the House, of this the warrior, that the seductress, burst into sudden light. What had I to do among them?

The presence of the living members of the Family was an extreme physical relief.

For the moment, beholding Ottilia, I counted her but as one of them. She welcomed me without restraint.

We chatter pleasantly at the dinner-table.

"Ah! you missed our French troupe," said the margravine.

"Yes," said I, resigning them to her. She nodded: vol. II.

- "And one very pretty little woman they had, I can tell you—for a Frenchwoman."
- "You thought her pretty? Frenchwomen know what to do with their brains and their pins, somebody has said."
- "And exceedingly well said, too. Where is that man Roy? Good things always remind me of him."

The question was addressed to no one in particular. The man happened to be my father, I remembered. A second allusion to him was answered by Prince Ernest:

- "Roy is off to Croatia to enrol some dozens of cheap workmen. The strength of those Croats is prodigious, and well looked after they work. He will be back in three or four or more days."
- "You have spoilt a good man," rejoined the margravine; "and that reminds me of a bad one—a cutthroat. Have you heard of that creature, the princess's tutor? Happily cut loose from us, though! He has published a book—a horror! all against Scripture and Divine right! Is there any one to defend him now, I should like to ask?"
 - "I," said Ottilia.
 - "Gracious me! you have not read the book?"
- "Right through, dear aunt, with all respect to you."
 - "It's in the house?"
 - "It is in my study."
- "Then I don't wonder! I don't wonder!" the margravine exclaimed.

- "Best hear what the enemy has to say," Prince Ernest observed.
- "Excellently argued, papa, supposing that he be an enemy."
- "An enemy as much as the fox is the enemy of the poultry-yard, and the hound is the enemy of the fox!" said the margravine.
- "I take your illustration, auntie," said Ottilia. "He is the enemy of chickens, and only does not run before the numbers who bark at him. My noble old professor is a resolute truth-seeker: he raises a light to show you the ground you walk on. How is it that you, adoring heroes as you do, cannot admire him when he stands alone to support his view of the truth! I would I were by him! But I am, whenever I hear him abused."
- "I daresay you discard nothing that the wretch has taught you!"
- "Nothing! nothing!" said Ottilia, and made my heart live.

The grim and taciturn Baroness Turckems, sitting opposite to her, sighed audibly.

- "Has the princess been trying to convert you?" the margravine asked her.
 - "Trying? no, madam. Reading? yes."
- "My good Turckems! you do not get your share of sleep?"
- "It is her highness the princess who despises sleep."

"See there the way with your free-thinkers! They commence by treading under foot the pleasantest half of life, and then they impose their bad habits on their victims. Ottilia! Ernest! I do insist upon having lights extinguished in the child's apartments by twelve o'clock at midnight."

"Twelve o'clock is an extraordinary latitude for children," said Ottilia, smiling.

The prince, with a scarce perceptible degree of emphasis, said,—

"Women born to rule must be held exempt from nursery restrictions."

Here the conversation opened to let me in. More than once the margravine informed me that I was not the equal of my father.

"Why," said she, "why can't you undertake this detestable coal-mine, and let your father disport himself?"

I suggested that it might be because I was not his equal. She complimented me for inheriting a spark of Roy's brilliancy.

I fancied there was a conspiracy to force me back from my pretensions by subjecting me to the contemplation of my bare self and actual condition. Had there been I should have suffered from less measured strokes. The unconcerted design to humiliate inferiors is commonly successfuller than conspiracy.

The prince invited me to smoke with him, and talked of our gradual subsidence in England to one

broad level of rank through the intermixture by mar-165 riage of our aristocracy, squierearchy, and merchants.

"Here it is not so," he said; "and no democratic ragings will make it so. Rank, with us, is a principle. I suppose you have not read the professor's book? is powerful—he is a powerful man. damage to the minds of persons destined by birth to wield authority-none, therefore, to the princess. would say to you—avoid it. For those who have to carve their way it is bad. You will enter your Parliament, of course? There you have a fine career."

He asked me what I had made of Chancellor von Redwitz.

I perceived that Prince Ernest could be cool and sagacious in repairing what his imprudence or blindness had left to occur: that he must have enlightened his daughter as to her actual position, and was most dexterously and devilishly flattering her worldly good sense by letting it struggle and grow, instead of oppos-His appreciation of her intellect was an idolatry; he really confided in it, I knew; and this reacted upon her. Did it? My hesitations and doubts, my fantastic raptures and despair, my loss of the power to appreciate anything at its right value, revealed the madness of loving a princess.

There were preparations for the arrival of an import. ant visitor. The margravine spoke of him emphatically. I thought it might be her farcically pompous way announcing my father's return, and looked pleased, suppose, for she added, "Do you know Prince Hermann? He spends most of his time in Eberhardstadt. He is cousin of the King, a wealthy branch; tant soit peu philosophe, à ce qu'on dit; a traveller. he has a South American complexion. I knew him a boy; and his passion is to put together what Nature has unpieced, bones of fishes and animals. Il faut passer le temps. He adores the Deluge. Anything antediluvian excites him. He can tell us the 'modes' of those days; and, if I am not very much misinformed, he still expects us to show him the very latest of these. Happily my milliner is back from Paris. Ay, and we have fossils in our neighbourhood, though, on my honour, I don't know where-somewhere; the princess can guide him, and you can help at the excavations. I am told he would go through the crust of earth for the backbone of an idio-ilio-something -saurus."

I scrutinized Prince Hermann as rarely my observation had dwelt on any man. He had the German head, wide, so as seemingly to force out the ears; honest, ready, interested eyes in conversation; parched lips; a rather tropically-coloured skin; and decidedly the manners of a gentleman to all, excepting his retinue of secretaries, valets, and chasseurs—his "blacks," he called them. They liked him. One could not help liking him.

"You study much?" he addressed the princess at table.

She answered: "I throw aside books, now you have come to open the earth and the sea."

From that time the topics started on every occasion were theirs; the rest of us ran at their heels, giving tongue or not.

To me Prince Hermann was perfectly courteous. He had made English friends on his travels; he preferred English comrades in adventure to any other: thought our East Indian empire the most marvellous thing the world had seen, and our Indian Government cigars very smokeable upon acquaintance. When stirred, he bubbled with anecdote. "Not been there," was his reply to the margravine's tentatives for gossip of this and that of the German Courts. His museum, hunting, and the opera absorbed and divided his hours. guessed his age to be mounting forty. He seemed robust; he ate vigorously. Drinking he conscientiously performed as an accompanying duty, and was flushed after dinner, burning for tobacco and a couch for his length. Then he talked of the littleness of Europe and the greatness of Germany; logical postulates fell in collapse before him. America to America, North and South: India to Europe. India was for the land with the largest sea-board. Mistress of the Baltic, of the North Sea and the East, as eventually she must be, Germany would claim to take India as a matter of course, and find an outlet for the energies of the most prolific and the toughest of the races of mankind,—the purest, in fact, the only true race, properly so called,

out of India, to which it would return as to its source. and there create an empire magnificent in force and solidity, the actual wedding of East and West; an empire firm on the ground and in the blood of the people, instead of an empire of aliens, that would bear comparison to a finely fretted cotton-hung palanquin balanced on an elephant's back, all depending on the docility of the elephant (his description of Great Britain's Indian Empire.) "And mind me," he said. "the masses of India are in character elephant all over. tail to proboscis! servile till they trample you, and not so stupid as they look. But you've done wonders in India, and we can't forget it. Your administration of justice is worth all your battles there."

This was the man: a milder one after the evaporation of his wine in speech, and peculiarly moderate on his return, exhaling sandal-wood, to the society of the ladies.

Ottilia danced with Prince Hermann at the grand ball given in honour of him. The wives and daughters of the notables present kept up a buzz of comment on his personal advantages, in which, I heard it said, you saw his German heart, though he had spent the best years of his life abroad. Much court was paid to him by the men. Sarkeld visibly expressed satisfaction. One remark, "We shall have his museum in the town!" left me no doubt upon the presumed object of his visit: it was uttered and responded to with a depth of sentiment that showed how lively would be the

general gratitude towards one who should exhilarate the place by introducing cases of fish-bones.

So little did he think of my presence that, returning from a ride one day, he seized and detained the princess's hand. She frowned with pained surprise, but unresistingly, as became a young gentlewoman's dignity. Her hand was rudely caught and kept in the manner of a boisterous wooer-a Harry the Fifth or lusty Petruchio. She pushed her horse on at a bound, and I reversed my hold of my riding-whip. Hermann rode up head to head with her gallantly. having now both hands free of the reins, like an Indian spearing the buffalo:-it was buffalo courtship; and his shout of rallying astonishment at her resistance, "What? What?" rang wildly to heighten the scene, she leaning constrained on one side and he bending half his body's length; a strange scene for me to witness. I raced up closer, but I had to await the lady's orders before I dared strike between them.

Ottilia drew rein. "Now!" she said, and her hand was suffered to fall.

Then to me: "Mr. Richmond, I have my servant."
This was enough. They proceeded with old Schwartz at their heels doglike. It became a question for me whether I should follow in the bitter track, and further the question whether I could let them escape from sight. They wound up the roadway, two figures and one following, now dots against the sky, now a single movement in the valley, now concealed, buried under billows of

forest, making the low noising of the leaves an intolerable whisper of secrecy, and forward I rushed again to see them rounding a belt of firs or shadowed by rocks, solitary on shorn fields, once more dipping to the forest, and once more emerging, vanishing. When I had grown sure of their reappearance from some point of view or other, I spied for them in vain. My destiny, whatever it might be, fluttered over them; to see them seemed near the knowing of it, and not to see them, deadly. I galloped, so intent on the three in the distance, that I did not observe a horseman face towards me, on the road: it was Prince Hermann. He raised his hat; I stopped short, and he spoke:—

"Mr. Richmond, permit me to apologize to you. I have to congratulate you, it appears. I was not aware. ---However, the princess has done me the favour to enlighten me. How you will manage I can't guess, but that is not my affair. I am a man of honour; and, on my honour, I conceived that I was invited here to decide, as my habit is, on the spot, if I would, or if I would not. I speak clearly to you, no doubt. There could be no hesitation in the mind of a man of sense. My way is prompt and blunt; I am sorry I gave you occasion to reflect on it. There! I have been deceived -deceived myself, let's say. Sharp methods play the devil with you now and then. To speak the truth,perhaps you won't care to listen to it,-family arrangements are the best; take my word for it, they are the best. And in the case of princesses of the Blood!---

Why, look you, I happen to be suitable. It's a matter of chance, like your height, complexion, constitution. One is just what one is born to be, eh? You have your English notions, I my German; but as a man of the world in the bargain, and 'gentleman,' I hope, I should say that to take a young princess's fancy, and drag her from her station, is not—of course, you know that the actual value of the title goes if she steps down? Very well. But enough said; I thought I was in a clear field. We are used to having our way cleared for us, nous autres. I will not detain you."

We saluted gravely, and I rode on at a mechanical pace, discerning by glimpses the purport of what I had heard, without drawing warmth from it. The man's outrageously royal way of wooing, in contempt of minor presences and flimsy sentiments, made me jealous of him, notwithstanding his overthrow.

I was in the mood to fall entirely into my father's hands, as I did by unbosoming myself to him for the first time since my heart had been under the charm. Fresh from a rapid course of travel, and with the sense of laying the prince under weighty obligations, he made light of my perplexity, and at once delivered himself bluntly: "She plights her hand to you in the presence of our good Peterborough." His plans were shaped on the spot. "We start for England the day after tomorrow to urge on the suit, Richie. Our Peterborough is up at the château. The Frau Feldmarschall honours him with a farewell invitation: you have a private

interview with the princess at midnight in the library, where you are accustomed to read, as a student of books should, my boy: at a touch of the bell, or mere opening of the door, I see that Peterborough comes to you. It will not be a ceremony, but a binding of you both by your word of honour before a ghostly gentleman." He informed me that his foresight had enlisted and detained Peterborough for this particular moment and identical piece of duty, which seemed possible, and in a singular manner incited me to make use of Peterborough. the princess still denied me the look of love's intelligence, she avoided me, she still kept to the riddle, and my delicacy went so far that I was restrained from writing. I agreed with my father that we could not remain in Germany; but how could I quit the field and fly to England on such terms? I composed the flattest letter ever written, requesting the princess to meet me about midnight in the library, that I might have the satisfaction of taking my leave of her; and this done, my spirits rose, and it struck me my father was practically wise, and I looked on Peterborough as an almost supernatural being. If Ottilia refused to come, at least I should know my fate. Was I not bound in manly honour to be to some degree adventurous? reasoned in exclamations, being, to tell truth, tired of seeming to be what I was not quite, of striving to become what I must have divined that I never could quite attain to. So my worthier, or ideal, self fell away from me. I was no longer devoted to be worthy of a woman's love, but consenting to the plot to entrap a princess. I was somewhat influenced, too, by the consideration, which I regarded as a glimpse of practical wisdom, that Prince Ernest was guilty of cynical astuteness in retaining me as his guest under manifold disadvantages. Personal pride stood up in arms, and my father's exuberant spirits fanned it. He dwelt loudly on his services to the prince, and his own importance and my heirship to mighty riches. He made me almost believe that Prince Ernest hesitated about rejecting me; nor did it appear altogether foolish to think so, or why was I at the palace? I had no head for reflections.

My father diverted me by levelling the whole battery of his comic mind upon Peterborough, who had a heap of manuscript, directed against heretical German theologians, to pack up for publication in his more congenial country:—how different, he ejaculated, from this nest—this forest of heresy, where pamphlets and critical essays were issued without let or hindrance, and as far as he could see, no general reprobation of the Press, such as would most undoubtedly, with one voice, hail any strange opinions in our happy land at home! Whether he really understood the function my father prepared him for, I cannot say. The invitation to dine and pass a night at the lake-palace flattered him immensely.

We went up to the château to fetch him.

A look of woe was on Peterborough's countenance when we descended at the palace portals: he had forgotten his pipe.

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"You shall smoke one of the prince's," my father said.

Peterborough remarked to me,—"We shall have many things to talk over in England."

"No tobacco allowed on the premises at Riversley, I'm afraid," said I.

He sighed, and bade me jocosely to know that he regarded tobacco as just one of the consolations of exiles and bachelors.

- "Peterborough, my good friend, you are a hero!" cried my father, "He divorces tobacco to marry!"
- "Permit me," Peterborough, interposed, with an ingenuous pretension to subtle waggery, in itself very comical,—"permit me; no legitimate union has taken place between myself and tobacco!"
- "He puts an end to the illegitimate union between himself and tobacco that he may marry according to form!" cried my father.

We entered the palace merrily, and presently Peterborough, who had worn a studious forehead in the midst of his consenting laughter, observed, "Well, you know, there is more in that than appears on the surface."

His sweet simpleton air of profundity convulsed me. I handed my father the letter addressed to the princess to entrust it to the charge of one of the domestics, thinking carelessly at the time that Ottilia now stood free to make appointments and receive communications, and moreover that I was too proud to condescend to

subterfuge, except this minor one, in consideration for her, of making it appear that my father, and not I, was in communication with her. My fit of laughter clung. I dressed chuckling. The margravine was not slow to notice and comment on my hilarious readiness.

"Roy," she said, "you have given your son spirit. One sees he has your blood when you have been with him an hour."

"The season has returned, if your highness will let it be spring," said my father.

"Far fetched!—from the Lower Danube!" she ejaculated in mock scorn to excite his sprightliness, and they fell upon a duologue as good as wit for the occasion.

Prince Hermann had gone. His departure was mentioned with the ordinary commonplaces of regret. Ottilia was unembarrassed, both in speaking of him and looking at me. We had the Court-physician and his wife at table, Chancellor von Redwitz and his daughter, and General Happenwyll, chief of the prince's contingent, a Prussian at heart, said to be a good officer on the strength of a military book of some sort that he had full leisure to compose. The Chancellor's daughter and Baroness Turckems enclosed me.

I was questioned by the baroness as to the cause of my father's unexpected return, "He is generally opportune," she remarked.

"He goes with me to England," I said.

"Oh! he goes," said she; and asked why we were

honoured with the presence of Mr. Peterborough that evening. There had always been a smouldering hostility between her and my father.

To my surprise the baroness spoke of Ottilia by her name.

"Ottilia must have mountain air. These late hours destroy her complexion. Active exercise by day and proper fatigue by night time—that is my prescription."

"The princess," I replied, envying Peterborough, who was placed on one side of her, "will benefit, I am sure, from mountain air. Does she read excessively? The sea——"

"The sea I pronounce bad for her—unwholesome," returned the baroness. "It is damp."

I laughed.

"Damp," she reiterated. "The vapours, I am convinced, affect mind and body. That excursion in the yacht did her infinite mischief. The mountains restored her. They will again, take my word for it. Now take you my word for it, they will again. She is not too strong in constitution, but in order to prescribe accurately one must find out whether there is a seated malady. To ride out in the night instead of reposing! To drive on and on, and not reappear till the night of the next day! I ask you, is it sensible? Does it not approach mania?"

- "The princess?-" said I.
- "Ottilia has done that."
- "Baroness, can I believe you?-and alone?"

A marvellous twinkle or shuffle appeared in the small s ate-coloured eves I looked at under their roofing of thick black eyebrows.

- "Alone," she said. "That is, she was precautious to have her giant to protect her from violence. you have a glimmering of reason in her; and all of it that I can see."
- "Old Schwartz is a very faithful servant," said I, hinking that she resembled the old Warhead in visage.
- "A dog's obedience to the master's whims you call faithfulness! Hem!" The baroness coughed drily.
- I whispered: "Does Prince Ernest-is he aware?"
- "You are aware," retorted the baroness, "that what a man idolises he won't see flaw in. Remember, I am something here, or I am nothing."

The enigmatical remark was received by me decorously as a piece of merited chastisement. Nodding with gravity, I expressed regrets that the sea did not please her, otherwise I could have offered her a yacht for a cruise. She nodded stiffly. Her mouth shut up a smile, showing more of the door than the ray. The dinner, virtually a German supper, ended in general conversation on political affairs, preceded and supported by a discussion between the Prussian-hearted general and the Austrian-hearted margravine. Prince Ernest. true to his view that diplomacy was the weapon of minor sovereigns, held the balance, with now a foot in one 32

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scale, now in the other, a politic proceeding, so long as the rival powers passively consent to be weighed.

We trifled with music, made our bow to the ladies, and changed garments for the smoking-room. Prince Ernest smoked his one cigar among guests. The general, the chancellor, and the doctor, knew the signal for retirement, and rose simultaneously with the discharge of his cigar-end in sparks on the unlit logwood pile. My father and Mr. Peterborough kept their chairs.

There was, I felt with relief, no plot, for nothing had been definitely assented to by me. I received Prince Ernest's proffer of his hand, on making my adieux to him, with a passably clear conscience.

I went out to the library. A man came in for orders; I had none to give. He saw that the shutters were fixed and the curtains down, examined my handlamp, and placed lamps on the reading-desk and mantelpiece. Bronze busts of sages became my solitary companions. The room was long, low and dusky, voluminously and richly hung with draperies at the farther end, where a table stood for the prince to jot down memoranda, and a sofa to incline him to the relaxation of romance-reading. A door at this end led to the sleeping apartments of the west wing of the palace. Where I sat the student had ranges of classical volumes in prospect and classic heads; no other decoration to the walls. I paced to and fro and should have flung myself on the sofa, but for a heap of books there

covered from dust, perhaps concealed, that the yellow Parisian volumes, of which I caught sight of some new dozen, might not be an attraction to the eyes of chance-comers. At the lake-palace the prince frequently gave audience here. He had said to me, when I stated my wish to read in the library, "You keep to the classical department?" I thought it possible he might not like the coloured volumes to be inspected; I had no taste for a perusal of them. I picked up one that fell during my walk, and flung it back, and disturbed a heap under cover, for more fell, and there I let them lie.

Ottilia did not keep me waiting.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SCENE IN THE LAKE-PALACE LIBRARY.

I was humming the burden of Göthe's Zigeunerlied, a favourite one with me whenever I had too much to think of, or nothing. A low rush of sound from the hall-door-way swung me on my heel, and I saw her standing with a silver lamp raised in her right hand to the level of her head, as if she expected to meet obscurity. A thin blue Indian scarf muffled her throat and shoulders. Her hair was loosely knotted. The lamp's full glow illumined and shadowed her. She was like a statue of Twilight.

I went up to her quickly, and closed the door, saying, "You have come;" my voice was not much above a breath.

She looked distrustfully down the length of the room; "You were speaking to some one?"

- " No."
- "You were speaking."
- "To myself, then, I suppose."

I remembered and repeated the gipsy burden.

She smiled faintly and said it was the hour for Anna and Ursel and Käth and Liese to be out.

Her hands were gloved, a small matter to tell of.

We heard the portico-sentinel challenged and relieved.

"Midnight," I said.

She replied: "You were not definite in your directions about the minutes."

- "I feared to name midnight."
- " Why?"
- "Lest the appointment of midnight-I lose my knowledge of you!—should make you reflect, frighten you. You see, I am inventing a reason; I really cannot tell why, if it was not that I hoped to have just those few minutes more of you. And now they're gone. I would not have asked you but that I thought you free to act."
 - "Tam."
 - "And you come freely?"
 - "A 'therefore' belongs to every grant of freedom."
 - "I understand: your judgment was against it."
- "Be comforted," she said; "it is your right to bid me come, if you think fit."

One of the sofa-volumes fell. She caught her breath; and smiled at her foolish alarm.

I told her that it was my intention to start for England in the morning; that this was the only moment I had, and would be the last interview: my rights, if I possessed any, and I was not aware that I did, I threw down.

"You throw down one end of the chain," she said.

"In the name of heaven, then," cried I, "release yourself."

She shook her head. "That is not my meaning."

Note the predicament of a lover who has a piece of dishonesty lurking in him. My chilled self-love had certainly the right to demand the explanation of her coldness, and I could very well guess that a word or two drawn from the neighbourhood of the heart would fetch a warmer current to unlock the ice between us, but feeling the coldness I complained of to be probably a suspicion, I fixed on the suspicion as a new and deeper injury done to my loyal love for her, and armed against that I dared not take an initiative for fear of unexpectedly justifying it by betraying myself.

Yet, supposing her inclination to have become diverted, I was ready frankly to release her with one squeeze of hands, and take all the pain, and I said: "Pray do not speak of chains."

"But they exist. Things cannot be undone for us two by words."

The tremble as of a strung wire in the strenuous pitch of her voice seemed to say she was not cold, though her gloved hand resting its finger-ends on the table, her restrained attitude, her very calm eyes, declared the reverse. This and that sensation beset me in turn.

We shrank oddly from uttering one another's Christian name. I was the first with it; my "Ottilia!" brought soon after "Harry" on her lips, and an atmosphere about us much less Arctic.

- "Ottilia, you have told me you wish me to go to England."
 - "I have."
 - "We shall be friends."
- "Yes, Harry; we cannot be quite divided; we have that knowledge for our present happiness."
- "The happy knowledge that we may have our bone to gnaw when food's denied. It is something. One would like possibly, after expulsion out of Eden, to climb the gates to see how the trees grow there. What I cannot imagine is the forecasting of any joy in the privilege."
- "By nature or system, then, you are more impatient than I, for I can," said Ottilia. She added: "So much of your character I divined early. It was part of my reason for wishing you to work. You will find that hard work in England-but why should I preach to you! Harry, you have called me here for some purpose?"
 - "I must have detained you already too long."
- "Time is not the offender. Since I have come, the evil-"
 - "Evil? Are not your actions free?"
- "Patience, my friend. The freer my actions, the more am I bound to deliberate on them. I have the

habit of thinking that my deliberations are not in my sex's fashion of taking counsel of the nerves and the blood. In truth, Harry, I should not have come but for my acknowledgment of your right to bid me come."

- "You know, princess, that in honouring me with your attachment, you imperil your sovereign rank?"
 - " I do."
 - "What next?"
 - " Except that it is grievously in peril, nothing!"
 - "Have you known it all along?"
- "Dimly—scarcely. To some extent I knew it, but it did not stand out in broad daylight. I have been learning the world's wisdom recently. Would you have had me neglect it? Surely much is due to my father? My relatives have claims on me. Our princely Houses have. My country has."
 - "Oh, princess, if you are pleading-"
 - "Can you think that I am?"

The splendour of her high nature burst on me with a shock.

I could have fallen to kiss her feet, and I said indifferently; "Not pleading, only it is evident the claims—I hate myself for bringing you in antagonism with them. Yes, and I have been learning some worldly wisdom; I wish for your sake it had not been so late. What made me overleap the proper estimate of your rank! I can't tell; but now that I know better the kind of creature—the man who won your esteem when you knew less of the world!"——

"Hush! I have an interest in him, and do not suffer him to be spurned," Ottilia checked me. "I, too, know him better, and still, if he is dragged down I am in the dust; if he is abused the shame is mine." Her face bloomed.

Her sweet warmth of colour was transfused through my veins.

- "We shall part in a few minutes. I have a mind to beg a gift of you."
 - " Name it."
 - " That glove."

She made her hand bare and gave me, not the glove, but the hand.

- "Ah! but this I cannot keep."
- "Will you have everything spoken?" she said, in a tone that would have been reproachful had not ten-"There should be a spirit between derness melted it. us, Harry, to spare the task. You do keep it, if you choose. I have some little dread of being taken for a madwoman, and more—an actual horror of behaving ungratefully to my generous father. He has proved that he can be indulgent, most trusting and considerate for his daughter, though he is a prince; my duty is to show him that I do not forget I am a princess. I owe my rank allegiance when he forgets his on my behalf, my friend! You are young. None but an inexperienced girl hoodwinked by her tricks of intuition, would have dreamed you superior to the passions of other men. I was blind; I am regretful-take my

word as you do my hand-for no one's sake but my father's. You and I are bound fast; only, help me that the blow may be lighter for him; if I descend from the place I was born to, let me tell him it is to occupy one I am fitted for, or should not at least feel my Family's deep blush in filling. To be in the midst of life in your foremost England is, in my imagination, very glorious. Harry, I remember picturing to myself when I reflected upon your country's history—perhaps a vear after I had seen the 'two young English gentlemen.' -that you touch the morning and evening star, and wear them in your coronet, and walk with the sun west and east! child's imagery; but the impression does not If I rail at England, it is the anger of love. wear off. I fancy I have good and great things to speak to the people through you."

There she stopped. The fervour she repressed in speech threw a glow over her face, like that on a frosty bare autumn sky after sunset.

I pressed my lips to her hand.

In our silence another of the fatal yellow volumes thumped the floor.

She looked into my eyes and asked,-

"Have we been speaking before a witness?"

So thoroughly had she renovated me, that I accused and reproved the lurking suspicion with a soft laugh.

"Beloved! I wish we had been."

"If it might be," she said, divining me and musing.

"Why not?"

She stared.

"How? What do you ask?"

The look of my face alarmed her. I was breathless and colourless, with the heart of a hawk eyeing his bird—a fox, would be the truer comparison, but the bird was noble, not one that cowered. Her beauty and courage lifted me into high air, in spite of myself, and it was a huge weight of greed that fell away from me when I said,—

- "I would not urge it for an instant. Consider—if you had just plighted your hand in mine before a witness!"
- "My hand is in yours; my word to you is enough."
- "Enough. My thanks to heaven for it! consider—a pledge of fidelity that should be my secret angel about me in trouble and trial; my wedded soul! She cannot falter, she is mine for ever, she guides me, holds me to work, inspirits me!-she is secure from temptation, from threats, from everything-nothing can touch, nothing move her, she is mine! I mean, an attested word, a form, that is—a betrothal. For me to say—my beloved and my betrothed! You hear that? Beloved! is a lonely word—betrothed! carries us joined up to death. Would you?—I do but ask to know that To-morrow I am loose in the world, and you would. there's a darkness in the thought of it almost too terrible. Would you?—one sworn word that gives me

my bride, let men do what they may! I go then singing to battle—sure!——Remember, it is but the question whether you would."

"Harry, I would, and will," she said, her lips shuddering—"wait"—for a cry of joy escaped me—"I will—look you me in the eyes and tell me you have a doubt of me."

I looked: she swam in a mist.

We had our full draught of the divine self-oblivion which floated those ghosts of the two immortal lovers through the bounds of their purgatorial circle, and for us to whom the minutes were ages, as for them to whom all time was unmarked, the power of supreme love swept out circumstance. Such embraces cast the soul beyond happiness, into no known region of sadness, but we drew apart sadly, even as that involved pair of bleeding recollections looked on the life lost to them. I knew well what a height she dropped from when the senses took fire. She raised me to learn how little of fretful thirst and its reputed voracity remains with love when it has been met midway in air by a winged mate able to sustain, unable to descend farther.

And it was before a witness, though unviewed by us.

The farewell had come. Her voice was humbled.

Never, I said, delighting in the now conscious bravery of her eyes engaging mine, shadowy with the struggle, I would never doubt of her, and I renounced all pledges. To be clear in my own sight as well as in hers, I made mention of the half-formed conspiracy to obtain her plighted troth in a binding manner. It was not necessary for me to excuse myself; she did that, saying, "Could there be a greater proof of my darling's unhappiness? I am to blame."

We closed hands for parting. She hesitated and asked if my father was awake; then promptly to my answer: "I will see him. I have treated you ill. I have exacted too much patience. The suspicion was owing to a warning I had this evening, Harry; a silly warning to beware of snares; and I had no fear of them, believe me, though for some moments, and without the slightest real desire to be guarded, I fancied Harry's father was overhearing me. He is your father, dearest: fetch him to me. My father will hear of this from my lips—why not he? Ah! did I suspect you ever so little? I will atone for it; not atone, I will make it my pleasure; it is my pride that has hurt you both. O my lover! my lover! Dear head, dear eyes! Delicate and noble that you are! my own stronger soul! Where was my heart? Is it sometimes dead, or sleeping? But you can touch it to life. Look at me-I am yours. I consent, I desire it; I will see him. The heavier the chains, oh! the better for be bound. What am I to be proud of anything not yours, Harry? and I that have passed over to you! I will see him at once."

A third in the room cried out,-

"No, not that-you do not!"

The tongue was German and struck on us like a roll of unfriendly musketry before we perceived the enemy. "Princess Ottilia! you remember your dignity or I defend you and it, think of me what you will!"

Baroness Turckems, desperately entangled by the sofa-covering, rushed into the ray of the lamps and laid her hand on the bell-rope. In a minute we had an alarm sounding, my father was among us, there was a mad play of chatter, and we stood in the strangest nightmare-light that ever ended an interview of lovers.

CHAPTER XV.

HOMEWARD AND HOME AGAIN.

THE room was in flames, Baroness Turckems plucking at the bell-rope, my father looking big and brilliant.

"Hold hand!" he shouted to the frenzied baroness.

She counter-shouted; both of them stamped feet; the portico sentinel struck the butt of his musket on the hall-doors; bell answered bell along the upper galleries.

- "Foolish woman, be silent," cried my father.
- "Incendiary," she half-shrieked.

He turned to the princess, begging her to retire, but she stared at him, and I too, after having seen him deliberately apply the flame of her lamp to the curtains deemed him mad. He was perfectly self-possessed, and said, "This will explain the bell!" and fetched a deep breath, and again urged the princess to retire.

Peterborough was the only one present who bethought him of doing fireman's duty. The risk looked greater than it was. He had but to tear the lighted curtains down and trample on them. Suddenly the baroness called out, "The man is right! Come with me, princess; escape, your highness, escape! And you," she addressed me—"you rang the bell, you!"

"To repair your error, baroness," said my father.

"I have my conscience pure; have you?" she retorted.

He bowed and said, "The fire will also excuse your presence on the spot, baroness."

"I thank my God I am not so cool as you," said she.

"Your warmth"—he bent towards her—"shall always be your apology, baroness."

Seeing the curtains extinguished, Ottilia withdrew. She gave me no glance.

All this occurred before the night-porter, who was going his rounds, could reach the library. Lacqueys and maids were soon at his heels. My father met Prince Ernest with a florid story of a reckless student, either asleep or too anxious to secure a particular volume, and showed his usual consideration by not asking me to verify the narrative. With that, and with high praise of Peterborough, as to whose gallantry I heard him deliver a very circumstantial account, he, I suppose, satisfied the prince's curiosity, and appeased him, the damage being small compared with the uproar. Prince Ernest questioned two or three times, "What set him ringing so furiously?" My father made some reply.

Ottilia's cloud-pale windows were the sole greeting I

had from her on my departure early next morning, far wretcheder than if I had encountered a misfortune. was impossible for me to deny that my father had shielded the princess: she would never have run for a menace. As he remarked, the ringing of the bell would not of itself have forced her to retreat, and the nature of the baroness's alarum demanded nothing less than a conflagration to account for it to the household. felt humiliated on Ottilia's behalf, and enraged on my own. And I had, I must confess, a touch of fear of a man who could unhesitatingly go to extremities, as he had done, by summoning fire to the rescue. He assured me that moments such as those inspired him and were the pride of his life, and he was convinced that, upon reflection, "I should rise to his sublime pitch." He deluded himself with the idea of his having foiled Baroness Turckems, nor did I choose to contest it. though it struck me that she was too conclusively the foiler. She must have intercepted the letter for the princess. I remembered acting carelessness in handing it to my father for him to consign it to one of the domestics, and he passed it on with a flourish. Her place of concealment was singularly well selected under the sofa-cover, and the little heaps of paper-bound volumes. I do not fancy she meant to rouse the household; her notion probably was to terrorize the princess, that she might compel her to quit my presence. In rushing to the bell-rope, her impetuosity sent her stumbling on it with force, and while threaten-

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ing to ring, and meaning merely to threaten, she rang: and as it was not a retractable act, she continued ringing, and the more violently upon my father's appear-Catching sight of Peterborough at his heels. she screamed a word equivalent to a clergyman. She had lost her discretion, but not her wits. For any one save a lover—thwarted as I was, and perturbed by the shadow falling on the princess-my father's aplomb and promptness in conjuring a check to what he assumed to be a premeditated piece of villany on the part of Baroness Turckems, might have seemed tolerably worthy of admiration. Me the whole scene affected as if it had burnt my skin. I loathed that picture of him, constantly present to me, of his shivering the glass of Ottilia's semiclassical night-lamp, gravely asking her pardon, and stretching the flame to the curtain, with large eves blazing on the baroness. The stupid burlesque majesty of it was unendurable to thought. Nevertheless. I had to thank him for shielding Ottilia, and I had to brood on the fact that I had drawn her into a situation requiring such a shield. He, meanwhile, according to his habit, was engaged in reviewing the triumphs to "We have won a princess!" And what Engcome. land would say, how England would look, when, on a further journey, I brought my princess home, entirely occupied his imagination, to my excessive torture-a state of mind for which it was impossible to ask his mercy. His sole link with the past appeared to be this notion that he had planned all the good things in store

for us. Consequently I was condemned to hear of the success of the plot, until-for I had not the best of consciences—I felt my hand would be spell-bound in the attempt to write to the princess; and with that sense of incapacity I seemed to be cut loose from her, drifting back into the desolate days before I saw her wheeled in her invalid chair along the sands and my life knew sunrise. But whatever the mood of our affections, so it is with us island wanderers: we cannot gaze over towards England, knowing the old country to be close under the sea-line, and not hail it, and partly forget ourselves in the time that was. The smell of sea-air made me long for the white cliffs, the sight of the white cliffs revived pleasant thoughts of Riverslev. and thoughts of Riversley thoughts of Janet, which were singularly and refreshingly free from self-accusations. Some love for my home, similar to what one may have for winter, came across me, and some appreciation of Janet as well, in whose society I was sure to be at least myself, a creature much reduced in altitude, but without the cramped sensations of a man on a monument. My hearty Janet! I thanked her then for seeing me of my natural height.

Some hours after parting with my father in London, I lay down to sleep in my old home, feeling as if I had thrown off a coat of armour. I awoke with a sailor's song on my lips. Looking out of window at the well-known features of the heaths and dark firs, and waning oak copses, and the shadowy line of the downs stretch-

ing their long whale-backs south to west, it struck me that I had been barely alive of late. Indeed one who consents to live as I had done in a hope and a retrospect, will find his life slipping between the two, like the ships under the striding Colossus. I shook myself. braced myself, and saluted every one at the breakfasttable with the frankness of Harry Richmond. Congratulated on my splendid spirits, I was confirmed in the idea that I enjoyed them, though I knew of something hollow which sent an echo through me at intervals. Janet had become a fixed inmate of the house. bought her, and I shall keep her; she's the apple of my eye," said the squire, adding with characteristic scrupulousness, "if apple's female." I asked her whether she had heard from Temple latterly. "No; dear little fellow!" cried she, and I saw in a twinkling what it was that the squire liked in her, and liked it too. I caught sight of myself, as through a rift of cloud, trotting home from the hunt to a glad, frank, unpretending mate, with just enough of understanding to look up to mine. a second or so it was pleasing, as a glance out of his library across hill and dale will be to a strained student. Our familiarity sanctioned a comment on the growth of her daughter-of-the-regiment moustache, the faintest conceivable suggestion of a shadow on her soft upper lip. which a poet might have feigned to have fallen from her dark thick eyebrows.

"Why, you don't mean to say, Hal, it's not to your taste?" said the squire.

"No," said I, turning an eye on my aunt Dorothy, "I've loved it all my life."

The squire stared at me to make sure of this, muttered that it was to his mind a beauty, and that it was nothing more on Janet's lip than down on a flower, bloom on a plum. The poetical comparisons had the effect of causing me to examine her critically. She did not raise a spark of poetical sentiment in my bosom. She had grown a tall young woman, firmly built, light of motion, graceful perhaps; but it was not the grace of grace; the grace of simplicity, rather. She talked vivaciously and frankly, and gave (to friends) her whole eyes and a fine animation in talking; and her voice was a delight to friends; there was always the full ring of Janet in it, and music also. She still lifted her lip when she expressed contempt or dislike of persons; nor was she cured of her trick of frowning. She was as ready as ever to be flattered; that was evident. My grandfather's praise of her she received with a rewarding look back of kindness; she was not discomposed by flattery, and threw herself into no postures, nor blushed very deeply. 'Thank you for perceiving my merits,' she seemed to say; and to be just I should add that one could fancy her saying, you see them because you love me. wore her hair in a plain knot, peculiarly neatly rounded away from the temples, which sometimes gave to a face not aquiline a look of swiftness. The face was mobile, various, not at all suggestive of bad temper, in spite of her frowns. The profile of it was less assuring than

the front, because of the dark eyebrows' extension and the occasional frown, but that was not shared by the mouth, which was, I admitted to myself, a charming bow, running to a length at the corners like her eyebrows, quick with smiles. The corners of the mouth would often be in movement, setting dimples at work in her cheek, while the brows remained fixed, and thus at times a tender meditative air was given her that I could not think her own. Upon what could she possibly reflect? She had not a care, she had no education, she could hardly boast an idea—two at a time I was sure she never had entertained. The sort of wife for a foxhunting lord, I summed up, and hoped he would be a good fellow.

Peterborough was plied by the squire for a description of German women. Blushing and shooting a timid look from under his pendulous eyelids at my aunt, indicating that he was prepared to go the way of tutors at Riversley, he said he really had not much observed them.

"They're a whitey-brown sort of women, aren't they?" the squire questioned him, "with tow hair and fish eyes, high o' the shoulder, bony, and a towel skin and gone teeth, so I've heard tell. I've heard that's why the men have all taken to their beastly smoking."

Peterborough ejaculated: "Indeed! sir, really!"
He assured my aunt that German ladies were most agreeable, cultivated persons, extremely domesticated, retiring; the encomiums of the Roman historian were as well deserved by them in the present day as they had

been in the past; decidedly, on the whole, Peterborough would call them a virtuous race.

"Why do they let the men smoke, then?" said the squire. "A pretty style o' courtship. Come, sit by my hearth, ma'am; I'll be your chimney—faugh! dirty rascals!"

Janet said: "I rather like the smell of cigars."

"Like what you please, my dear—he'll be a lucky dog," the squire approved her promptly, and asked me if I smoked.

I was not a stranger to the act, I confessed.

"Well," he took refuge in practical philosophy, "a man must bring some dirt home from every journey: only don't smoke me out, mercy's sake."

Here was a hint of Janet's influence with him, and of what he expected from my return to Riversley.

Peterborough informed me that he suffered persecution over the last glasses of port in the evening, through the squire's persistent inquiries as to whether a woman had anything to do with my staying so long abroad. "A lady, sir?" quoth Peterborough. "Lady, if you like," rejoined the squire. "You parsons and petticoats must always mince the meat to hash the fact." Peterborough defended his young friend Harry's moral reputation, and was amazed to hear that the squire did not think highly of a man's chastity. The squire acutely chagrined the sensitive gentleman by drawling the word after him, and declaring that he tossed that kind of thing into the women's wash-basket. Peter-

borough, not without signs of indignation, protesting, the squire asked him point-blank if he supposed that Old England had been raised to the head of the world by such as he. In fine, he favoured Peterborough with a lesson in worldly views. "But these," Peterborough said to me, "are not the views, dear Harry—if they are the views of ladies of any description, which I take leave to doubt—not the views of the ladies you and I would esteem. For instance, the ladies of this household." My aunt Dorothy's fate was plain.

In reply to my grandfather's renewed demand to know whether any one of those High-Dutch women had got hold of me, Peterborough said: "Mr. Beltham, the only lady of whom it could be suspected that my friend Harry regarded her with more than ordinary admiration was hereditary princess of one of the ancient princely houses of Germany." My grandfather thereupon said, "Oh!" pushed the wine, and was stopped.

Peterborough chuckled over this "Oh!" and the stoppage of further questions, while acknowledging that the luxury of a pipe would help to make him more charitable. He enjoyed the port of his native land, but he did, likewise, feel the want of one whiff or so of the less restrictive foreigner's pipe; and he begged me to note the curiosity of our worship of aristocracy and royalty; and we, who were such slaves towards rank, and such tyrants in our own households,—we Britons were the great sticklers for freedom! His conclusion was, that we were not logical. We would have a throne,

which we would not allow the liberty to do anything to make it worthy of rational veneration; we would have a peerage, of which we were so jealous that it formed almost an assembly of automatons; we would have virtuous women, only for them to be pursued by immoral men. Peterborough feared, he must say, that we were an inconsequent people. His residence abroad had so far unhinged him; but a pipe would have stopped his complainings.

Moved, perhaps, by generous wine, in concert with his longing for tobacco, he dropped an observation of unwonted shrewdness; he said: "The squire, my dear Harry, a most honourable and straightforward country gentleman, and one of our very wealthiest, is still, I would venture to suggest, an example of old blood that requires—I study race—varying, modifying, one might venture to say correcting; and really, a friend with more privileges than I possess, would or should throw him a hint that no harm has been done to the family by an intermixture old blood does occasionally need it—you know I study blood—it becomes too coarse, or, in some cases, too fine. The study of the mixture of blood is probably one of our great physical problems."

Peterborough commended me to gratitude for the imaginative and chivalrous element bestowed on me by a father that was other than a country squire; one who could be tolerant of innocent habits, and not of guilty ones—a further glance at the interdicted pipe. I left him almost whimpering for it.

The contemplation of the curious littleness of the lives of men and women lived in this England of ours, made me feel as if I looked at them out of a palace balcony-window; for no one appeared to hope very much, or to fear; people trotted in their different kinds of harness; and I was amused to think of my heart going regularly in imitation of those about me. I was in a princely state of mind indeed, not disinclined for a time to follow the general course of life, while despising An existence without colour, without anxious it. throbbing, without salient matter for thought, challenged contempt. But it was exceedingly funny. aunt Dorothy, the squire, and Janet submitted to my transparent inward laughter at them, patiently waiting for me to share their contentment, in the deluded belief that the hour would come. The principal items of news embraced the death of Squire Gregory Bulsted, the marriage of this and that young lady, a legal contention between my grandfather and Lady Maria Higginson, the wife of a rich manufacturer newly located among us, on account of a right of encampment on Durstan heath, my grandfather taking side with the gipsies, and beating her ladyship—a friend of Heriot's, by the way. Concerning Heriot, my aunt Dorothy was She could not, she said, approve his behaviour in coming to this neighbourhood at all, and she hinted that I might induce him to keep away. I mentioned Julia Bulsted's being in mourning, merely to bring in her name tentatively.

"Ay, mourning's her outer rig, never doubt," said the squire. "Flick your whip at her, she's a charitable soul, Judy Bulsted! She knits stockings for the poor. She'd down and kiss the stump of a sailor on a stick o' timber. All the same, she oughtn't to be alone. Pity she hasn't a baby. You and I'll talk over it byand-by, Harry."

Kiomi was spoken of, and Lady Maria Higginson, and then Heriot.

"M—m—m—m rascal!" hummed the squire.
"There's three, and that's not enough for him. Six months back a man comes over from Surreywards, a farm he calls Dipwell, and asks after you, Harry; rigmaroles about a handsome lass gone off some scoundrel! You and I'll talk it over by-and-by, Harry."

Janet raised and let fall her eyebrows. The fiction that, so much having been said, an immediate show of reserve on such topics preserved her in ignorance of them, was one she subscribed to merely to humour the squire. I was half in doubt whether I disliked or admired her want of decent hypocrisy. She allowed him to suppose that she did not hear, but spoke as a party to the conversation. My aunt Dorothy blamed Julia. The squire thundered at Heriot; Janet, liking both, contented herself with impartial comments. "I always think in these cases that the women must be the fools," she said. Her affectation was to assume a knowledge of the world and all things in it. We rode over to Julia's cottage, on the outskirts of the estate now devolved upon

her husband. Irish eyes are certainly bewitching lights. I thought, for my part, I could not do as the captain was doing, serving his country in foreign parts, while such as these were shining without a captain at home. Janet approved his conduct, and was right. "What can a wife think the man worth who sits down to guard his house-door?" she answered my slight inuendo. She compared the man to a kennel-dog. "This," said I, "comes of made-up matches," whereat she was silent.

Julia took her own view of her position. asked me whether it was not dismal for one who was called a grass widow, and was in reality a salt-water one, to keep fresh, with a lap-dog, a cook and a maid-servant, and a postman that passed the gate twenty times for twice that he opened it, and nothing to look for but this disappointing creature day after day! At first she was shy, stole out a coy line of fingers to be shaken, and lisped; and out of that mood came right-aboutface, with an exclamation of regret that she supposed she must not kiss me now. I projected, she drew back. "Shall Janet go?" said I. "Then if nobody's present I'll be talked of," said she, moaning queerly. tendency of her hair to creep loose of its bands gave her handsome face an aspect deliriously wild. I complimented her on her keeping so fresh, in spite of her salt-water widowhood. She turned the tables on me for looking so powerful, though I was dying for a foreign princess. "Oh! but that'll blow over," she said; "anything blows over as long as you don't go up to the altar;" and she eyed her ringed finger, wobegone, and flashed the pleasantest of smiles with the name of her William. Heriot, whom she always called Walter Heriot, was, she informed me, staying at Durstan Hall, the new great house, built on a plot of ground that the Lancashire millionaire had caught up, while the squire and the other landowners of the neighbourhood were sleeping. "And if you get Walter Heriot to come to you, Harry Richmond, it'll be better for him, I'm sure," she added, and naïvely: "I'd like to meet him up at the Grange." Temple, she said had left the navy and was reading in London for the Bar—good news to me.

- "You have not told us anything about your princess, Harry," Janet observed on the ride home.
 - "Do you take her for a real person, Janet?"
- "One thinks of her as a snow-mountain you've been admiring."
 - "Very well; so let her be."
 - "Is she kind and good?"
 - " Yes."
 - "Does she ride well?"
 - "She rides remarkably well."
 - "She's fair, I suppose?"
- "Janet, if I saw you married to Temple, it would be the second great wish of my heart."
 - "Harry, you're a bit too cruel, as Julia would say."
 - "Have you noticed she gets more and more Irish?"
 - "Perhaps she finds it is liked. Some women can

adapt themselves . . . they're the happiest. All I meant to ask you is, whether your princess is like the rest of us?"

"Not at all," said I, unconscious of hurting.

"Never mind. Don't be hard on Julia. She has the making of a good woman; a girl can see that; only she can't bear loneliness, and doesn't understand yet what it is to be loved by a true gentleman. Persons of that class can't learn it all at once."

I was pained to see her in tears. Her figure was straight, and she spoke without a quaver of her voice.

"Heriot's an excellent fellow," I remarked.

"He is. I can't think ill of my friends," said she.

"Dear girl, is it these two who made you unhappy?"

"No; but dear old grandada! . . ."

The course of her mind was obvious. I would rather have had her less abrupt and more personal in revealing it. I stammered something.

"Heriot does not know you as I do," she said, strangling a whimper. "I was sure t was serious, though one's accustomed to associate princesses with young men's dreams. I fear, Harry, it will half break our dear old grandada's heart. He is rough, and you have often been against him, for one unfortunate reason. If you knew him as I do you would pity him sincerely. He hardly grumbled at all at your terribly long absence. Poor old man! he hopes on."

"He's incurably unjust to my father."

- "Your father has been with you all the time, Harry? I guessed it."
 - " Well?"
- "It generally bodes no good to the Grange. Do pardon me for saying that. I know nothing of him; I know only that the squire is generous, and that I stand for him with all my might. Forgive me for what I said."
- "Forgive you; with all my heart. I like you all the better. You're a brave partisan. I don't expect women to be philosophers."
- "Well, Harry, I would take your side as firmly as anybody's."
 - "Do, then; tell the squire how I am situated."
 - "Ah!" she half sighed, "I knew this was coming."
- "How could it other than come? You can do what you like with the squire. I'm dependent on him, and I am betrothed to the Princess Ottilia. God knows how much she has to trample down on her part. She casts off—to speak plainly, she puts herself out of the line of succession, and for whom? for me. In her father's lifetime she will hardly yield me her hand; but I must immediately be in a position to offer mine. She may: who can tell? she is above all women in power and firmness. You talk of generosity; could there be a higher example of it?"
- "I daresay; I know nothing of princesses," Janet murmured. "I don't quite comprehend what she has done. The point is, what am I to do?"

- "Prepare him for it. Soothe him in advance. Why, dear Janet, you can reconcile him to anything in a minute."
 - "Lie to him downright?"
- "Now what on earth is the meaning of that, and why can't you speak mildly?"
- "I suppose I speak as I feel. I'm a plain speaker, a plain person. You don't give me an easy task, friend Harry."
- "If you believe in his generosity, Janet, should you be afraid to put it to proof?"
- "Grandada's generosity, Harry? I do believe in it as I believe in my own life. It happens to be the very thing I must keep myself from rousing in him, to be of any service to you. Look at the old house!" She changed her tone. "Looking on old Riversley with the eyes of my head even, I think I'm looking at something far away in the memory. Perhaps the deep red brick causes it. There never was a house with so many beautiful creepers. Bright as they are, you notice the roses on the wall. There's a face for me for ever from every window; and good-by, Riversley! Harry, I'll obey your wishes."

So saying, she headed me, trotting down the heath-track.

CHAPTER XVI.

JANET RENOUNCES ME.

An illness of old Sewis, the butler,—amazingly resembling a sick monkey in his bed-kept me from paying a visit to Temple and seeing my father for several weeks, during which time Janet loyally accustomed the squire to hear of the German princess, and she did it with a decent and agreeable cheerfulness that I quite approved of. I should have been enraged at a martyr-like appearance on her part, for I demanded a sprightly devotion to my interests, considering love so holy a thing, that where it existed, all surrounding persons were bound to do it homage and service. We were thrown together a great deal in attending on poor old Sewis, who would lie on his pillows recounting for hours my father's midnight summons of the inhabitants of Riversley, and his little Harry's infant expedition into the world. Temple and Heriot came to stay at the Grange, and assisted in some rough scene-paintingtorrid colours representing the island of Jamaica. We hung it at the foot of old Sewis's bed. He awoke and 34 VOL. II.

contemplated it, and went downstairs the same day, cured, he declared; the fact being that the unfortunate picture testified too strongly to the reversal of all he was used to in life, in having those he served to wait on him. The squire celebrated his recovery by giving a servants' Sewis danced with the handsomest lass, swung her to supper, and delivered an extraordinary speech, entirely concerning me, and rather to my discomposure, particularly so when it was my fate to hear that the old man had made me the heir of his savings. his announcement in a very excited voice, but incidentally upon a solemn adjuration to the squire to beware of his temper—govern his temper and not be a turncoat. We were present at the head of the supper-table to hear our healths drunk. Sewis spoke like a half-caste oblivious of his training, and of the subjects he was at liberty to touch on as well. Evidently there was a weight of foreboding on his mind. He knew his master well. The squire excused him under the ejaculation, "Drunk, by the Lord!" Sewis went so far as to mention my father. "He no disgrace, sar, he no disgrace, I say! but he pull one way, old house pull other way, and 'tween 'em my little Harry torn apieces, squire. He set out in the night. 'You not enter it any more!' Very well. I go my lawyer next day. You see my will, squire. Years ago, and little Harry so high. Sewis not the man to change. He no turncoat, squire. God bless you, my master; you recollect, and ladies tell you if you forget, old Sewis no turncoat. You

hate turncoat. You taught old Sewis, and God bless you, and Mr. Harry, and British Constitution, all, Amen!"

With that he bounded to bed. He was dead next morning.

The squire was humorous over my legacy. amounted to about seventeen hundred pounds invested in Government Stock, and he asked me what I meant to do with it; proposed a charity to be established on behalf of decayed half-castes, insisting that servants' money could never be appropriated to the uses of gentle-All the while he was muttering "Turncoat! eh? turncoat?" proof that the word had struck where it was aimed. For me, after thinking on it, I had a superstitious respect for the legacy, so I determined, in spite of the squire's laughter over "Sixty pounds per annum!" to let it rest in my name. I saw for the first time the possibility that I might not have my grandfather's wealth to depend upon. He warned me of growing miserly. With my father in London living freely on my property, I had not much fear of that. However, I said discreetly, "I don't mind spending when I see my way."

"Oh! see your way," said he. "Better a niggard than a chuckfist. Only, there's my girl: she's good at accounts. One'll do for them, Harry?—ha'n't been long enough at home yet?"

Few were the occasions when our conversation did not diverge to this sort of interrogation. Temple and Heriot, with whom I took counsel, advised me to wait until the idea of the princess had worn its way into his understanding, and leave the work to Janet. "Though," said Heriot to me aside, "upon my soul, it's slaughter." He believed that Janet felt keenly. But then, she admired him, and so they repaid one another.

I won my grandfather's confidence in practical matters on a trip we took into Wales. But it was not enough for me to be a man of business, he affirmed; he wanted me to have some ambition; why not stand for our county at the next general election? He offered me his Welsh borough if I thought fit to decline a con-This was to speak as mightily as a German prince. Virtually, in wealth and power, he was a prince; but of how queer a kind! He was immensely gratified by my refraining to look out for my father on our return journey through London, and remarked that I had not seen him for some time, he supposed. which I said, no, I had not. He advised me to let the fellow run his length. Suggesting that he held it likely I contributed to "the fellow's" support: he said generously, "Keep clear of him, Hal: I add you a thousand a year to your allowance," and damned me for being so thoughtful over it. I found myself shuddering at a breath of anger from him. Could he not with a word dash my hopes for ever? The warning I had taken from old Sewis transformed me to something like a hypocrite, and I dare say I gave the squire to understand that I had not seen my father for a very long

period and knew nothing of his recent doings. "Been infernally quiet these last two or three years," the squire muttered of the object of his aversion. "I heard of a City widow last, sick as a Dover packet-boat bout the fellow! Well, the women are ninnies, but you're a man, Harry; you're not to be taken in any longer, eh?"

I replied that I knew my father better now, and was asked how the deuce I knew him better. It was the world I knew better after my stay on the Continent.

I contained myself enough to say, "Very well, the world, sir."

"Flirted with one of their princesses?" He winked.

"On that subject I will talk to you some other time." said I.

"Got to pay an indemnity? or what?" He professed alarm, and pushed for explanations with the air of a man of business ready to help me if need were. "Make a clean breast of it, Harry. You're not the son of Tom Fool the Bastard for nothing, I'll swear. All the same you're Beltham; you're my grandson and heir, and I'll stand by you. Out with 't! She's a princess, is she?"

The necessity for correcting his impressions taught me to think the moment favourable. I said, "I am engaged to her, sir."

He returned promptly: "Then you'll break it off." I shook my head.

- "Why you can't jilt my girl at home!" said he.
- "Do you find a princess objectionable, sir?"
- "Objectionable? She's a foreigner. I don't know her. I never saw her. Here's my Janet I've brought up for you, under my own eyes, out of the way of every damned soft-sawderer, safe and plump as a melon under a glass, and you fight shy of her and go and engage yourself to a foreigner I don't know and never saw! By George, Harry, I'll call in a parson to settle you soon as ever we sight Riversley. I'll couple you, by George, I will! 'fore either of you know whether you're on your legs or your backs."

We were in the streets of London, so he was obliged to moderate his vehemence.

- "Have you consulted Janet?" said I.
- "Consulted her? ever since she was a chick with half a feather on."
- "A chick with half a feather on," I remarked, "is not always of the same mind as a piece of poultry of full plumage."
- "Hang your sneering and your talk of a fine girl, like my Janet, as a piece of poultry, you young rooster! You toss your head up like a cock too conceited to crow. I'll swear the girl's in love with you. She does you the honour to be fond of you. She's one in a million. A handsome girl, straight-backed, honest, just a dash, and not too much, of our blood in her."
- "Consult her again, sir," I broke in. "You will discover she is not of your way of thinking."

"Do you mean to say she's given you a left-hander, Harry?"

"I have only to say that I have not given her the option."

He groaned going up the steps of his hotel, faced me once or twice, and almost gained my sympathy by observing, "When we're boys, the old ones worry us; when we're old ones, the boys begin to tug!" He rarely spoke so humanly,—rarely, at least, to me.

For a wonder, he let the matter drop; possibly because he found me temperate. I tried the system on him with good effect during our stay in London; that is, I took upon myself to be always cool, always courteous, deliberate in my replies, and not uncordial, though I was for representing the reserved young man. I obtained some praise for my style and bearing among his acquaintances. To one lady passing an encomium on me, he said, "Oh, some foreign princess has been training him," which seemed to me of good augury.

My friends Temple and Heriot were among the Riversley guests at Christmas. We rode over to John Thresher's, of whom we heard that the pretty Mabel Sweetwinter had disappeared, and understood that suspicion had fallen upon one of us gentlemen. Bob, her brother, had gone the way of the bravest English fellows of his class—to America. We called on the miller, a soured old man. Bob's evasion affected him more than Mabel's, Martha Thresher said, in derision of our sex. I was pained to hear from her that Bob

supposed me the misleader of his sister; and that he had, as she believed, left England, to avoid the misery of ever meeting me again, because he liked me so much. She had been seen walking down the lanes with some one resembling me in figure. Heriot took the miller's view, counting the loss of one stout young Englishman to his country of far greater importance than the escapades of dozens of girls, for which simple creatures he had no compassion: he held the expression of it a sham. It was given them to exercise the choice whether they would be prey to the natural hawk, man, if they liked it; pity was waste of breath, nonsense. bantered him capitally by tracing the career of the natural hawk gorged with prey, and the mighty service he was of to his country. Heriot retorted that all great men had, we should find, entertained his ideas about women; but he was compelled to admit that a vast number of very small ones were similarly to be distinguished. He had grown terribly coxcombical. Without talking of his conquests, he talked largely of the ladies who were possibly in the situation of victims to his grace of person, though he did not do so with any unctuous boasting. On the contrary, there was a rather taking undertone of regret that his enfeebled over-fat country would give her military son no worthier occupa-He laughed at the mention of Julia Bulsted's "She proves, Richie, marriage is the best of all receipts for women, just as it's the worst for men. Poor Billy Bulsted, for instance, a first-rate seaman,

and his heart's only half in his profession since he and Julia swore their oath; and no wonder,—he made something his own that won't go under lock and key. No military or naval man ought ever to marry."

"Stop," said Temple, "is the poor old country to be denied a chance of heirs of their gallant bodies? How about continuing the race of heroes?"

Heriot commended him to rectories, vicarages, and curates' lodgings for breeding grounds, and coming round to Julia related one of the racy dialogues of her married life. "The salt-water widow's delicious. Billy rushes home from his ship in a hurry. 'What's this Greg writes me?'—'That he's got a friend of his to drink with him, d'ye mean, William?'—'A friend of yours, ma'am.'—'And will you say a friend of mine is not a friend of yours, William?'—'Julia, you're driving me mad!'—'And is that far from crazy where you said I drove you at first sight of me, William?' Back to his ship goes Billy with a song of love and constancy."

I said nothing of my chagrin at the behaviour of the pair who had furnished my first idea of the romantic beauty of love.

"Why does she talk twice as Irish as she used to, Heriot?"

"Just to coax the world to let her be as nonsensical as she likes. She's awfully dull; she has only her nonsense to amuse her. I repeat: soldiers and sailors oughtn't to marry. I'm her best friend. I am, on my honour: for I'm going to make Billy give up the ser-

vice, since he can't give her up. There she is!" he cried out, and waved his hat to a lady on horseback some way down the slope of a road leading to the view of our heathland: "There's the only girl living fit to marry a man and swear she'll stick to him through life and death."

He started at a gallop. Temple would have gone too at any possible speed, for he knew as well as I did that Janet was the girl alone capable of winning a respectful word from Heriot; but I detained him to talk of Ottilia and my dismal prospect of persuading the squire to consent to my proposal for her, and to dower her in a manner worthy a princess. He doled out his ves and no to me vacantly. Janet and Heriot came at a walking pace to meet us, he questioning her, she replying, but a little differently from her usual habit of turning her full face to the speaker. He was evidently startled, and, to judge from his posture, repeated his question, as one would say, 'You did this?' She nodded, and then uttered some rapid words, glanced at him, laughed shyly, and sank her features into repose as we drew near. She had a deep blush on her face. I thought it might be that Janet and her loud champion had come to particular terms, a supposition that touched me with regrets for Temple's sake. But Heriot was not looking pleased. It happened that whatever Janet uttered struck a chord of opposition in me. She liked the winter and the winter sunsets, had hopes of a frost for skating, liked our climate, thought our way of keeping Christmas venerable, rejoiced in dispensing the squire's bounties — called them bounties, joined Heriot in abusing foreign countries to the exaltation of her own—all this with "Well, Harry, I'm sorry you don't think as we do. And we do, don't we?" she addressed him.

"I reserve a point," he said, and not playfully.

She appeared distressed, and courted a change of expression in his features, and I have to confess that never having seen her gaze upon any one save myself in that fashion, which was with her very winning, especially where some of her contralto tones of remonstrance or entreaty aided it, I felt as a man does at a neighbour's shadow cast over his rights of property.

Heriot dropped to the rear: I was glad to leave her with Temple, and glad to see them canter ahead together on the sand of the heaths.

"She has done it," Heriot burst out abruptly. She has done it!" he said again. "Upon my soul, I never wished in my life before that I was a marrying man: I might have a chance of ending worth something. She has won the squire round with a thundering fib, and you're to have the German if you can get her. Don't be in a hurry. The squire'll speak to you to-night: but think over it. Will you? Think what a girl this is. I believe on my honour no man ever had such an offer of a true woman. Come, don't think it's Heriot speaking—I've always liked her, of course. But I have always respected her, and that's not of course. Depend upon it, a woman who can be a friend of men is the

right sort of woman to make a match with. Do you suppose she couldn't have a dozen fellows round her at the lift of her finger?—the pick of the land! I'd trust her with an army. I tell you, Janet Ilchester's the only girl alive who'll double the man she marries. I don't know another who wouldn't make the name of wife laugh the poor devil out of house and company. She's firm as a rock; and sweet as a flower on it! Will that touch you? Bah! Richie, let's talk like men. I feel for her because she's fond of you, and I know what it is when a girl like that sets her heart on a fellow. There," he concluded, "I'd ask you to go down on your knees and pray before you decide against her!"

Heriot succeeded in raising a certain dull, indistinct image in my mind of a well-meaning girl, to whom I was bound to feel thankful, and felt so. I thanked Heriot, too, for his friendly intentions. He had never seen the Princess Ottilia. And at night I thanked my grandfather. He bore himself, on the whole, like the good and kindly old gentleman Janet loved to consider him. He would not stand in my light, he said, recurring to that sheet-anchor of a tolerant sentence whenever his forehead began to gather clouds. He regretted that Janet was no better than her sex in her preference for rakes, and wished me to the deuce for bringing Heriot into the house, and not knowing when I was lucky. "German great-grand-children, eh!" he muttered. No Beltham had ever married a foreigner. What was the time fixed between us for the marriage?

He wanted to see his line safe before he died. "How do I know this foreign woman 'll bear?" he asked, expecting an answer. His hand was on the back of a chair, grasping and rocking it; his eyes bent stormily on the carpet; they were set blinking rapidly after a glance at me. Altogether his self-command was creditable to Janet's tuition.

Janet met me next day, saying with some insolence (so it struck me from her liveliness): "Well, it's all right, Harry? Now you'll be happy, I hope." not shine in my reply. Her amiable part appeared to be to let me see how brilliant and gracious the commonplace could be made to look. She kept Heriot at the Grange, against the squire's remonstrance and her mother's. "It's to keep him out of harm's way: the women he knows are not of the best kind for him," she said, with astounding fatuity. He submitted, and seemed to like it. She must be teaching Temple to skate figures in the frost, with a great display of goodhumoured patience, and her voice at musical pitches. But her principal affectation was to talk on matters of business with Mr. Burgin and Mr. Trewint, the squire's lawyer and bailiff, on mines and interest, on money and economical questions; not shrinking from politics either, until the squire cries out to the males assisting in the performance, "Gad, she's a head as good as our halfdozen put together," and they servilely joined their fragmentary capitals in agreement. She went so far as to retain Peterborough to teach her Latin. He was

idling in the expectation of a living in the squire's gift. The annoyance for me was that I could not detach myself from a contemplation of these various scenes, by reverting to my life in Germany. That preposterous closing to my interview with Ottilia blocked the way. and I was unable to write to her-unable to address her even in imagination, without pangs of shame at the review of the petty conspiracy I had sanctioned to entrap her to plight her hand to me, and without perpetually multiplying excuses for my conduct. So to escape them I was reduced to study Janet, forming one of her satellites. She could say to me impudently, with all the air of a friendly comrade, "Had your letter from Germany vet, Harry?" She flew-she was always on the chase. I saw her permit Heriot to kiss her hand, and then the squire appeared, and Heriot and she burst into laughter, and the squire, with a puzzled face, would have the game explained to him, but understood not a bit of it, only growled at me; upon which Janet became serious and chid him. I was told by my aunt Dorothy to admire this behaviour of hers. One day she certainly did me a service: a paragraph in one of the newspapers spoke of my father, not flatteringly: "Richmond is in the field again," it commenced. The squire was waiting for her to hand the paper to him. None of us could comprehend why she played him off and denied him his right to the first perusal of the news; she was voluble, almost witty, full of sprightly Roxalana petulance. "This paper," she said, "deserves to be burnt," and

she was allowed to burn it-money article, mining column as well-on the pretext of an infamous anti-Tory leader, of which she herself composed the first sentence to shock the squire completely. I had sight of that paper some time afterwards. Richmond was in the field again, it stated, with mock flourishes. But that was not the worst. My grandfather's name was down there, and mine, and Princess Ottilia's. Μv father's connection with the court of Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld was alluded to as the latest, and next to his winning the heiress of Riversley, the most successful of his ventures, inasmuch as his son, if rumour was to be trusted, had obtained the promise of the hand of the The paragraph was an excerpt from a gossipprincess. ing weekly journal, perhaps less malevolent than I thought it. There was some fun to be got out of a man who, the journal in question was informed, had joined the arms of England and a petty German principality stamped on his plate and furniture.

My gratitude to Janet was fervent enough when I saw what she had saved me from. I pressed her hand and held it. I talked stupidly, but I made my cruel position intelligible to her, and she had the delicacy, on this occasion, to keep her sentiments regarding my father unuttered. We sat hardly less than an hour side by side—I know not how long hand in hand. The end was an extraordinary trembling in the limb abandoned to me. It seized her frame. I would have detained her, but it was plain she suffered both in her heart and her

pride. Her voice was under fair command-more than She counselled me to go to London at once. "I would be off to London if I were you, Harry,"for the purpose of checking my father's extravagances, -would have been the further wording, which she spared me; and I thanked her, wishing, at the same time, that she would get the habit of using choicer phrases whenever there might, by chance, be a stress of emotion between us. Her trembling, and her "I'd be off," came into unpleasant collision in the recollection. I acknowledge to myself that she was a true and hearty She listened with interest to my discourse on friend. the necessity of my being in Parliament before I could venture to propose formally for the hand of the princess, and undertook to bear the burden of all consequent negotiations with my grandfather. If she would but have allowed me to speak of Temple, instead of saying, "Don't, Harry, I like him so much!" at the very mention of his name, I should have sincerely felt my indebtedness to her, and some admiration of her fine spirit and figure besides. I could not even agree with my aunt Dorothy that Janet was handsome. When I had to grant her a pardon I appreciated her better.

CHAPTER XVII.

MY BANKERS' BOOK.

THE squire again did honour to Janet's eulogy and good management of him.

"And where," said she, "would you find a Radical to behave so generously, Harry, when it touches him so?"

He accorded me his permission to select my side in politics, merely insisting that I was never to change it, and this he requested me to swear to, for (he called the ghost of old Sewis to witness) he abhorred a turncoat.

"If you're to be a Whig, or a sneaking half-and-half, I can't help you much," he remarked. "I can pop a young Tory in for my borough, maybe; but I can't insult a number of independent Englishmen by asking them to vote for the opposite crew; that's reasonable, eh? And I can't promise you plumpers for the county neither. You can date your Address from Riversley. You'll have your house in town. Tell me this princess of yours is ready with her hand, and," he threw in roughly, "is a respectable young woman, you. II.

I'll commence building. You'll have a house fit for a prince in town and country, both."

Temple had produced an effect on him by informing him that "this princess of mine" was entitled to be considered a fit and proper person, in rank and blood, for an alliance with the proudest royal houses of Europe, and my grandfather was not quite destitute of consolation in the prospect I presented to him. He was a curious study to me of the Tory mind, in its attachment to solidity, fixity, certainty, its unmatched generosity within a limit, its devotion to the family, and its family eye for the country. An immediate introduction to Ottilia would have won him to enjoy the idea of his grandson's marriage; but not having seen her, he could not realize her dignity, nor even the womanliness of a foreign woman.

"Thank God for one thing," he said: "we shan't have that fellow bothering—shan't have the other half of your family messing the business. You'll have to account for him to your wife as you best can. I've nothing to do with him, mind that. He came to my house, stole my daughter, crazed her wits, dragged us all"

The excuse to turn away from the hearing of abuse of my father was too good to be neglected, though it was horribly humiliating that I should have to take advantage of it—vexatious that I should seem chargeable with tacit lying in allowing the squire to suppose the man he hated to be a stranger to the princess. Not

feeling sure whether it might be common prudence to delude him even passively, I thought of asking Janet for her opinion, but refrained. A stout deceiver has his merits, but a feeble hypocrite applying to friends to fortify him in his shifts and tergiversations must provoke contempt. I desired that Janet might continue to think well of me. I was beginning to drop in my own esteem, which was the mirror of my conception of Ottilia's view of her lover. Now, had I consulted Janet, I believe the course of my history would have been different, for she would not then, I may imagine, have been guilty of her fatal slip of the tongue that threw us into heavy seas when we thought ourselves floating on canal waters. A canal barge (an image to me of the most perfect attainable peace), suddenly, on its passage through our long fir-woods, with their scented reeds and flowering rushes, wild balsam and silky cotton-grass beds, sluiced out to sea and storm, would be somewhat in my likeness soon after a single luckless observation had passed at our Riversley breakfast-table one Sunday morning.

My aunt Dorothy and Mr. Peterborough were conversing upon the varieties of Christian sects, and particularly such as approached nearest to Anglicanism, together with the strange, saddening fact that the Christian religion appeared to be more divided than, Peterborough regretted to say, the forms of idolatry established by Buddh, Mahomet, and other impostors. He claimed the audacious merit for us that we did not

discard the reason of man: we admitted man's finite reason to our school of faith, and it was found refractory. Hence our many divisions.

"The Roman Catholics admit reason?" said Janet, who had too strong a turn for showing her keenness in little encounters with Peterborough.

"No," said he; "the Protestants." And, anxious to elude her, he pressed on to enchain my aunt Dorothy's attention. Janet plagued him meanwhile, and I helped her. We ran him and his schoolboy, the finite refractory, up and down, until Peterborough was glad to abandon him, and Janet said, "Did you preach to the Germans much?" He had officiated in Prince Ernest's private chapel: not, he added in his egregious modesty, not that he personally wished to officiate.

"It was Harry's wish?" Janet said, smiling.

"My post of tutor," Peterborough hastened to explain, "was almost entirely supernumerary. The circumstances being so, I the more readily acquiesced in the title of private chaplain, prepared to fulfil such duties as devolved upon me in that capacity, and acting thereon I proffered my occasional services. Lutheranism and Anglicanism are not, doubtless you are aware, divided on the broader bases. We are common Protestants. The Papacy, I can assure you, finds as little favour with one as with the other. Yes, I held forth, as you would say, from time to time. My assumption of the title of private chaplain, it was thought, improved the family dignity—that is, on our side."

"Thought by Harry?" said Janet; and my aunt Dorothy said, "You and Harry had a consultation about it?"

"Wanted to appear as grand as they could," quoth the squire.

Peterborough signified an assent, designed to modify the implication. "Not beyond due bounds, I trust, sir."

"Oh! now I understand," Janet broke out in the falsetto notes of a puzzle solved in the mind. "It was his father! Harry proclaiming his private chaplain!"

"Mr. Harry's father did first suggest——" said Peterborough, but her quickly altered features caused him to draw in his breath, as she had done after one short laugh.

My grandfather turned a round side-eye on me, hard as a cock's.

Janet immediately started topics to fill Peterborough's mouth: the weather, the walk to church, the probable preacher. "And, grandada," said she to the squire, who was muttering ominously with a grim under-jaw, "His private chaplain!" and for this once would not hear her,—"Grandada, I shall drive you over to see papa this afternoon." She talked as if nothing had gone wrong. Peterborough, criminal red, attacked a jam-pot for a diversion. "Such sweets are rare indeed on the Continent," he observed to my aunt Dorothy. "Our home-made dainties are matchless."

"Private chaplain!" the squire growled again.

"It's you that preach this afternoon," Janet said to Peterborough. "Do you give us an extempore sermon?"

"You remind me, Miss Ilchester, I must look to it: I have a little trimming to do."

Peterborough thought he might escape, but the squire arrested him. "You'll give me five minutes before you're out of the house, please. D'ye smoke on Sundays?"

"Not on Sundays, sir," said Peterborough, openly and cordially, as to signify that they were of one mind regarding the perniciousness of Sunday smoking.

"See you don't set fire to my ricks with your foreign chaplain's tricks. I spied you puffing behind one t'other day. There," the squire dispersed Peterborough's unnecessary air of abstruse recollection, "don't look as though you were trying to hit on a pin's head in a bushel of oats. Don't set my rick's on fire—that's all."

"Mr. Peterborough," my aunt Dorothy interposed her voice to soften this rough treatment of him with the offer of some hot-house flowers for his sitting-room.

"Oh, I thank you!" I heard the garlanded victim lowing as I left him to the squire's mercy.

Janet followed me out. "It was my fault, Harry. You won't blame him, I know. But will he fib? I don't think he's capable of it, and I'm sure he can't run and double. Grandada will have him fast before a minute is over."

I told her to lose no time in going and extracting

the squire's promise that Peterborough should have his living,—so much it seemed possible to save.

She flew back, and in Peterborough's momentary absence, did her work. Nothing could save the unhappy gentleman from a distracting scene and much archaic English. The squire's power of vituperation was notorious: he could be more than a match for roadside navvies and predatory tramps in cogency of epithet. borough came to me drenched, and wailing that he had never heard such language,-never dreamed of it. And to find himself the object of it !-- and worse, to be unable to conscientiously defend himself! The pain to him was in the conscience,—which is like the spleen, a function whose uses are only to be understood in its He had eased his conscience to every derangement. question right out, and he rejoiced to me at the immense relief it gave him. Conscientiously he could not deny that he knew the squire's objection to my being in my father's society; and he had connived at it "for reasons, my dearest Harry, I can justify to God and man, but not-I had to confess as much-not, I grieve to say, to your grandfather. I attempted to do justice to the amiable qualities of the absent. In a moment I was assailed with epithets that . . . and not a word is to be got in when he is so violent. One has to make up one's mind to act Andromeda, and let him be the sea-monster, as somebody has said; I forget the exact origin of the remark."

The squire certainly had a whole ocean at command.

I strung myself to pass through the same performance. To my astonishment I went unchallenged. vehemently asserted that she had mollified the angry old man, who, however, was dark of visage, though his tongue kept silence. He was gruff over his wine-glass: the blandishments of his favourite did not brighten him. From his point of view he had been treated vilely. and he was apparently inclined to nurse his rancour and keep my fortunes trembling in the balance. Under these circumstances it was impossible for me to despatch a letter to Ottilia, though I found that I could write one now, and I sat in my room writing all day,—most eloquent stuff it was. The shadow of misfortune restored the sense of my heroical situation, which my father had extinguished, and this unlocked the powers of speech. I wrote so admirably that my wretchedness could enjoy the fine millinery I decorated it in. Then to tear the noble composition to pieces was a bitter gratification. Ottilia's station repelled and attracted me mysteriously. I could not separate her from it, nor keep my love of her from the contentions into which it threw me. vain I raved, "What is rank?" There was a magnet in it that could at least set me quivering and twisting, behaving like a man spell-bound, as madly as any hero of the ballads under a wizard's charm.

At last the squire relieved us. He fixed that sidecast cock's eye of his on me, and said, "Where's your bankers' book, sir?"

I presumed that it was with my bankers, but did

not suggest the possibility that my father might have it in his custody; for he had a cheque-book of his own, and regulated our accounts. Why not? I thought, and flushed somewhat defiantly. The money was mine.

"Any objection to my seeing that book?" said the squire.

"None whatever, sir."

He nodded. I made it a point of honour to write for the book to be sent down to me immediately.

The book arrived, and the squire handed it to me to break the cover, insisting, "You're sure you wouldn't rather not have me look at it?"

"Quite," I replied. The question of money was to me perfectly unimportant. I did not see a glimpse of danger in his perusing the list of my expenses.

"'Cause I give you my word I know nothing about it now," he said.

I complimented him on his frank method of dealing, and told him to look at the book if he pleased, but with prudence sufficiently awake to check the declaration that I had not once looked at it myself.

He opened it. We had just assembled in the hall where breakfast was laid during winter, before a huge wood fire. Janet had her teeth on her lower lip, watching the old man's face. I did not condescend to be curious; but when I turned my head to him he was puffing through thin lips, and then his mouth crumpled in a knob. He had seen sights."

"By George, I must have breakfast 'fore I go into

this!" he exclaimed, and stared as if he had come out of an oven.

Dorothy Beltham reminded him that prayers had not been read.

"Prayers!" He was about to objurgate, but affirmatived her motion to ring the bell for the servants, and addressed Peterborough: "You read 'em abroad every morning?"

Peterborough's conscience started off on its inevitable jog-trot at a touch of the whip. "A—yes; that is—oh, it was my office." He had to recollect with exactitude: "I should specify exceptions; there were intervals..."

"Please, open your Bible," the squire cut him short; "I don't want a damned fine edge on everything."

Partly for an admonition to him, or in pure nervousness, Peterborough blew his nose monstrously: an unlucky note; nothing went well after it. "A slight cold," he murmured, and resumed the note, and threw himself maniacally into it. The unexpected figure of Captain Bulsted on tiptoe, wearing the ceremonial depressed air of intruders on these occasions, distracted our attention for a moment.

"Fresh from ship, William?" the squire called out.
The captain ejaculated a big word, to judge of it from the aperture, but it was mute as his footing on the carpet, and he sat and gazed devoutly towards Peterborough, who had waited to see him take his

seat, and must now, in his hurry to perform his duty, sweep the peccant little red-bound book to the floor. "Here, I'll have that," said the squire. "Allow me, sir," said Peterborough; and they sprang into a collision.

"Would you jump out of your pulpit to pick up an old woman's umbrella?" the squire asked him in anger, and muttered of requiring none of his clerical legerdemain with books of business. Tears were in Peterborough's eyes. My aunt Dorothy's eyes dwelt kindly on him to encourage him, but the man's irritable nose was again his enemy.

Captain Bulsted chanced to say in the musical voice of inquiry: "Prayers are not yet over, are they?"

"No, nor never will be with a parson blowing his horn at this rate," the squire rejoined. "And mind you," he said to Peterborough, after dismissing the servants, to whom my aunt Dorothy read the morning lessons apart, "I'd not have had this happen, sir, for money in lumps. I've always known I should hang the day when my house wasn't blessed in the morning by prayer. So did my father, and his before him. Fiddle! sir, you can't expect young people to wear decent faces when the parson's hopping over the floor like a flea, and trumpeting as if the organ-pipe wouldn't have the sermon at any price. You tried to juggle me out of this book here."

"On my!—indeed, sir, no!" Peterborough proclaimed his innocence, and it was unlikely that the squire should have suspected him.



Captain Bulsted had come to us for his wife, whom he had not found at home on his arrival last midnight.

- "God bless my soul," said the squire, "you don't mean to tell me she's gone off, William?"
- "Oh! dear, no, sir?" said the captain, "she's only cruising."

The squire recommended a draught of old ale. The captain accepted it. His comportment was cheerful in a sober fashion, notwithstanding the transparent perturbation of his spirit. He answered my aunt Dorothy's questions relating to Julia simply and manfully, as became a gallant seaman, cordially excusing his wife for not having been at home to welcome him, with the singular plea, based on his knowledge of the sex, that the nearer she knew him to be the less able was she to sit on her chair waiting like Patience. He drank his ale from the hands of Sillabin, our impassive new butler, who had succeeded Sewis, the squire told him, like a Whig Ministry the Tory; proof that things were not improving.

- "I thought, sir, things were getting better," said the captain.
- "The damnedst mistake ever made, William. How about the Fall of Man, then? eh? You talk like a heathen Radical. It's Scripture says we're going from better to worse, and that's Tory doctrine. And stick to the good as long as you can! Why, William, you were a jolly bachelor once."
 - "Sir, and ma'am," the captain bowed to Dorothy

Beltham, "I have, thanks to you, never known happiness but in marriage, and all I want is my wife."

The squire fretted for Janet to depart. "I'm going, grandada," she said. "You'll oblige me by not attending to any matter of business to-day. Give me that book of Harry's to keep for you."

- "How d'ye mean, my dear?"
- "It's bad work done on a Sunday, you know."
- "So it is. I'll lock up the book."
- "I have your word for that, grandada," said Janet.

The ladies retired, taking Peterborough with them.

"Good-by to the frocks! and now, William, out with your troubles," said the squire.

The captain's eyes were turned to the door my aunt Dorothy had passed through.

- "You remember the old custom, sir!"
- "Ay, do I, William. Sorry for you then; infernally sorry for you now, that I am! But you've run your head into the halter."
- "I love her, sir; I love her to distraction. Let any man on earth say she's not an angel, I flatten him dead as his lie. By the way, sir, I am bound in duty to inform you I am speaking of my wife."
- "To be sure you are, William, and a trim schooner-yacht she is."
 - "She's off, sir; she's off!"

I thought it time to throw in a word. "Captain Bulsted, I should hold any man but you accountable to me for hinting such things of my friend." "Harry, your hand," he cried, sparkling.

"Hum; his hand!" growled the squire. "His hand's been pretty lively on the Continent, William. Here, look at this book, William, and the bundle o' cheques! No, I promised my girl. We'll go into it to-morrow, he and I, early. The fellow has shot away thousands and thousands—been gallivanting among his foreign duchesses and countesses. There's a petticoat in that bank-book of his; and more than one, I wager. Now he's for marrying a foreign princess—got himself in a tangle there, it seems."

"Mightily well done, Harry!" Captain Bulsted struck a terrific encomium on my shoulder, groaning, "May she be true to you, my lad!"

The squire asked him if he was going to church that morning.

"I go to my post, sir, by my fireside," the captain replied; nor could he be induced to leave his post vacant by the squire's promise to him of a sermon from the new rector that would pickle his temper for a whole week's wear and tear. He regretted extremely that he could not enjoy so excellent a trial of his patience, but he felt himself bound to go to his post and wait.

I walked over to Bulsted with him, and heard on the way that it was Heriot who had called for her and driven her off. "The man had been, I supposed," Captain Bulsted said, "deputed by some of you to fetch her over to Riversley. My servants mentioned his name. I thought it advisable not to trouble the ladies with it to-day." He meditated. "I hoped I should find her at the Grange in the morning, Harry. I slept on it, rather than startle the poor lamb in the night."

I offered him to accompany him at once to Heriot's quarters.

"What! and let my wife know I doubted her fidelity. My girl shall never accuse me of that."

As it turned out, Julia had been taken by Heriot on a visit to Lady Maria Higginson, the wife of the intrusive millionaire, who particularly desired to know her more intimately. Thoughtless Julia, accepting the impudent invitation without scruple, had allowed herself to be driven away without stating the place of her destination. She and Heriot were in the Higginsons' pew at church. Hearing from Janet of her husband's arrival, she rushed home, and there, instead of having to beg forgiveness, was summoned to grant pardon. Captain Bulsted had drawn largely on Squire Gregory's cellar to assist him in keeping his post.

The pair appeared before us fondling ineffably next day, neither one of them capable of seeing that our domestic peace at the Grange was unseated. "We're the two wretchedest creatures alive; haven't any of ye to spare a bit of sympathy for us?" Julia began. "We're like on a pitchfork. There's William's duty to his country, and there's his affection for me, and they won't go together, because Government, which is that horrid Admiralty, fears pitching and tossing for postcaptains' wives. And William away, I'm distracted,

and the Admiralty's hair's on end if he stops. And, 'deed, Miss Beltham, I'm not more than married to just half a husband."

The captain echoed her, "Half! but happy enough for twenty whole ones, if you'll be satisfied, my duck."

Julia piteously entreated me, for my future wife's sake, not to take service under Government. As for the Admiralty, she said, it had no characteristic but the abominable one that it hated a woman. The squire laid two or three moderately coarse traps for the voluble frank creature, which she evaded with surprising neatness, showing herelf more awake than one would have imagined her. Janet and I fancied she must have come with the intention to act uxorious husband and Irish wife for the distinct purpose of diverting the squire's wrath from me, for he greatly delighted in the sight of merry wedded pairs. But they were as simple as possible in their display of happiness. It chanced that they came opportunely. My bankers' book had been the theme all the morning, and an astonishing one to me equally with my grandfather. Since our arrival in England, my father had drawn nine thousand pounds. The sums expended during our absence on the Continent reached the perplexing figures of forty-eight thou-I knew it too likely, besides, that all debts were not paid. Self-self-self drew for thousands at a time; sometimes, as the squire's convulsive forefinger indicated, for many thousands within a week. It was incomprehensible to him until I, driven at bay by questions and insults, and perceiving that concealment could not long be practised, made a virtue of the situation by telling him (what he in fact must have seen) that my father possessed a cheque-book as well as I, and like. wise drew upon the account. We had required the money; it was mine, and I had sold out Bank Stock and Consols, -which gave very poor interest, I remarked, cursorily-and had kept the money at my bankers', to draw upon according to our necessities. I pitied the old man while speaking. His face was livid: language died from his lips. He asked to have little things explained to him-the two cheque-books, for instance,—and what I thought of doing when this money was all gone: for he supposed I did not expect the same amount to hand every two years; unless, he added, I had given him no more than a couple of years' lease of life when I started for my tour. "Then the money's gone," he summed up; and this was the signal for redemanding explanations. Had he not treated me fairly and frankly in handing over my own to me on the day of my majority? Yes.

- "And like a fool, you think-eh?"
- "I have no such thought in my head, sir."
- "You have been keeping that fellow in his profligacy, and you're keeping him now. Why, you're all but a beggar! Comes to my house, talks of his birth, carries off my daughter, makes her mad, lets her child grow up to lay hold of her money, and then grips him fast and pecks him, fleeces him! You're you. II.

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beggared—d'ye know that? He's had the two years of you, and sucked you dry. What were you about? What were you doing? Did you have your head on? You shared cheque-books? good!.... The devil in hell never found such a fool as you! You had your house full of your foreign bonyrobers—eh? Out with it! How did you pass your time? Drunk and dancing?"

By such degrees my grandfather worked himself up to the pitch for his style of eloquence. I have given a faint specimen of it. When I took the liberty to consider that I had heard enough, he followed me out of the library into the hall, where Janet stood. presence he charged the princess and her family with being a pack of greedy adventurers, conspirators with "that fellow" to plunder me; and for a proof of it, he quoted my words, that my father's time had been spent in superintending the opening of a coal-mine on Prince Ernest's estate. "That fellow pretending to manage a coal-mine!" Could not a girl see it was a shuffle to hoodwink a greenhorn? And now he remembered it was Colonel Goodwin and his daughter who had told him of having seen "the fellow" engaged in playing court-buffoon to a petty German prince, and performing his antics, cutting capers like a clown at a fair.

"Shame!" said Janet.

"Hear her!" The squire turned to me.

But she cried: "Oh! grandada, hear yourself! or don't, but be silent. If Harry has offended you, speak like one gentleman to another. Don't rob me of my love for you: I haven't much besides that."

"No, because of a scoundrel and his young idiot!"

Janet frowned in earnest, and said: "I don't permit you to change the meaning of the words I speak."

He muttered a proverb of the stables. Reduced to behave temperately, he began the whole history of my bankers' book anew—the same queries, the same explosions and imprecations.

"Come for a walk with me, dear Harry," said Janet.

I declined to be protected in such a manner, absurdly on my dignity; and the refusal, together possibly with some air of contemptuous independence in the tone of it, brought the squire to a climax. "You won't go out and walk with her? You shall go down on your knees to her and beg her to give you her arm for a walk. By God! you shall, now, here, on the spot, or off you go to your German princess, with your butler's legacy, and nothing more from me but good-by and the door bolted. Now, down with you!"

He expected me to descend.

"And if he did, he would never have my arm." Janet's eyes glittered hard on the squire.

"Before that rascal dies, my dear, he shall whine like a beggar out in the cold for the tips of your fingers!"

"Not if he asks me first," said Janet.

This set him off again. He realized her prospective

generosity, and contrasted it with my actual obtuseness. Janet changed her tactics. She assumed indifference. But she wanted experience, and a Heriot to help her in playing a part. She did it badly—overdid it; so that the old man, now imagining both of us to be against his scheme for uniting us, counted my iniquity as twofold. Her phrase, "Harry and I will always be friends," roused the loudest of his denunciations upon me, as though there never had been question of the princess, so inveterate was his mind's grasp of its original designs. Friends! Would our being friends give him heirs by law to his estate and name? And so forth. My aunt Dorothy came to moderate his invectives. In her room the heavily-burdened little book of figures was produced, and the items read aloud; and her task was to hear them without astonishment, but with a business-like desire to comprehend them accurately, a method that softened the squire's outbursts by degrees. She threw out hasty running commentaries: "Yes, that was for a vacht;" and "They were living at the court of a prince: " such and such a sum was "large, but Harry knew his grandfather did not wish him to make a poor appearance."

"Why, do you mean to swear to me, on your oath, Dorothy Beltham," said the squire, amazed at the small amazement he created, "you think these two fellows have been spending within the right margin? What'll be women's ideas next?"

"No," she answered demurely. "I think Harry

has been extravagant, and has had his lesson. And surely it is better now than later? But you are not making allowances for his situation as the betrothed of a princess."

"That's what turns your head," said he; and she allowed him to have the notion, and sneer at herself and her sex.

"How about this money drawn since he came home?" the squire persisted.

My aunt Dorothy reddened. He struck his finger on the line marking the sum, repeating his demand; and at this moment Captain Bulsted and Julia arrived. The ladies manœuvred so that the captain and the squire were left alone together. Some time afterwards the captain sent out word that he begged his wife's permission to stay to dinner at the Grange, and requested me to favour him by conducting his wife to Bulsted: proof, as Julia said, that the two were engaged in a pretty hot tussle. She was sure her William would not be the one to be beaten. I led her away, rather depressed by the automaton performance assigned to me; from which condition I awoke with a touch of horror to find myself paying her very warm compliments; for she had been coquettish and charming to cheer me, and her voice was sweet. We reached a point in our conversation I know not where, but I must have spoken with some warmth. "Then guess," said she, "what William is suffering for your sake now, Harry;" that is, "suffering in remaining away from me on your account:"

and thus, in an instant, with a skill so intuitive as to be almost unconscious, she twirled me round to a right sense of my position, and set me reflecting, whether a love that clad me in such imperfect armour as to leave me penetrable to these feminine graces—a plump figure. swinging skirts, dewy dark eyelids, laughing red lipscould indeed be absolute love. And if it was not love of the immortal kind, what was I? I looked back on the thought like the ship on its furrow through the waters, and saw every mortal perplexity, and death under. My love of Ottilia delusion? Then life was delusion! I contemplated Julia in alarm, somewhat in the light fair witches were looked on when the faggots were piled for them. The sense of her unholy attractions abased and mortified me: and it set me thinking on the strangeness of my disregard of Mdlle. Jenny Chassediane when in Germany, who was far sprightlier if not prettier, and, as I remembered, had done me the favour to make discreet play with her eyelids in our encounters, and long eyes in passing. I caught myself regretting my coldness of that period; for which regrets I could have swung the scourge upon my miserable flesh. Ottilia's features seemed dying out of my mind. "Poor darling Harry!" Julia sighed. "And d've know, the sight of a young man far gone in love gives me the trembles?" I rallied her concerning the ladder scene in my old schooldays, and the tender things she had uttered to Heriot. She answered, "Oh! I think I got them out of poats and chapters about love-making,

or I felt it very much. And that's what I miss in William; he can't talk soft nice nonsense. I believe him, he would if he could, but he's like a lion of the desert: not made for cookery. It's a roar!"

I rejoiced when we heard the roar. Captain Bulsted returned to take command of his ship not sooner than I wanted him, and told us of a fierce tussle with the squire. He had stuck to him all day, and up to 11 P.M. "By George! Harry, he had to make humble excuses to dodge out of eyeshot a minute. Conquered him over the fourth bottle! And now all's right. He'll see your dad. 'In a barn?' says the squire. 'Here's to your better health, sir,' I bowed to him; 'gentlemen don't meet in barns; none but mice and traps make appointments there.' To shorten my story, my lad, I have arranged for the squire and your excellent progenitor to meet at Bulsted: we may end by bringing them over a bottle of old Greg's best. 'See the boy's father,' I kept on insisting. The point is, that this confounded book must be off your shoulders, my lad. A dirty dog may wash in a duck-pond. You see, Harry, the dear old squire may set up your account twenty times over, but he has a right to know how you twirl the coin. He says you don't supply the information. I suggest to him that your father can, and will. we get them into a room together. I'll be answerable for the rest. And now top your boom, and to bed here: off in the morning and tug the big vessel into port here! And, Harry, three cheers, and another

bottle to crown the victory, if you're the man for it?"

Julia interposed a decided negative to the proposition; an ordinarily unlucky thing to do with bibulous husbands, and the captain looked uncomfortably checked; but when he seemed to be collecting to assert himself, the humour of her remark, "Now, no bravado, William," disarmed him.

"Bravado, my sweet chuck?"

"Won't another bottle be like flashing your sword after you've won the day?" said she.

He slung his arm round her, and sent a tremendous whisper into my ear—"A perfect angel!"

I started for London next day, more troubled æsthetically regarding the effect produced on me by this order of perfect angels than practically anxious about material affairs, though it is true that when I came into proximity with my father, the thought of his all but purely mechanical power of making money spin, fly, and vanish, like sparks from a fire-engine, awakened a serious disposition in me to bring our monetary partnership to some definite settlement. He was living in splendour, next door but one to the grand establishment he had driven me to from Dipwell in the old days, with Mrs. Waddy for his housekeeper once more, Alphonse for his cook. Not living on the same scale, however, the troubled woman said. She signified that it was now the whirlwind. I could not help smiling to see how proud she was of him, nevertheless as a god-

like charioteer—in pace, at least. "Opera to-night," she answered my inquiries for him, admonishing me by her tone that I ought not to be behindhand in knowing his regal rules and habits. Praising his generosity, she informed me that he had spent one hundred pounds, and offered a reward of five times the sum, for the discovery of Mabel Sweetwinter. "Your papa never does things by halves, Mr. Harry!" Soon after she was whimpering, "Oh, will it last?" I was shown into the room called "The princess's room," a miracle of furniture, not likely to be occupied by her, I thought, the very magnificence of the apartment striking down hope in my heart like cold on a nerve. "Your papa says the whole house is to be for you, Mr. Harry, when the happy day comes." Could it possibly be that he had talked of the princess? I took a hasty meal and fortified myself with claret to have matters clear with him before the night was over.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I SEE MY FATHER TAKING THE TIDE AND AM CARRIED ON IT MYSELF.

My father stood in the lobby of the Opera, holding a sort of open court, it appeared to me, for a cluster of gentlemen hung round him; and I had presently to bow to greetings which were rather of a kind to flatter me, leading me to presume that he was respected as well as marvelled at. The names of Mr. Serjeant Wedderburn, Mr. Jennings, Lord Alton, Sir Weeton Slater, Mr. Monterez Williams, Admiral Loftus, the Earl of Witlington, were among those which struck my ear, and struck me as good ones. I could not perceive anything of the air of cynical satellites in these gentlemen-on the contrary they were cordially deferential. I felt that he was encompassed by undoubted gentlemen, and my warmer feelings towards my father returned when I became sensible of the pleasant sway he held over the circle, both in speaking and listening. His sympathetic smile and semi-droop of attention; his readiness, when occasion demanded it, to hit the key

of the subject and help it on with the right word; his air of unobtrusive appreciation; his sensibility to the moment when the run of conversation depended upon him—showed inimitable art coming of natural genius; and he did not lose a shade of his superior manner the while. Mr. Serjeant Wedderburn, professionally voluble, a lively talker, brimming with anecdote, but too sparkling, too prompt, too full of personal relish of his point, threw my father's urbane supremacy into marked relief; and so in another fashion did the Earl of Witlington, "a youth in the season of guffaws," as Jorian DeWitt described him, whom a jest would seize by the throat. shaking his sapling frame. Jorian strolled up to us goutily. No efforts of my father's would induce him to illustrate his fame for repartee, so it remained esta-"Very pretty waxwork," he said to me of blished. our English beauties swimming by. "Now, those women, young Richmond, if they were inflammable to the fiftieth degree, that is, if they had the fiftieth part of a Frenchwoman in them, would have canvassed society on the great man's account long before this, and sent him to the top like a bubble. He wastes his time That fat woman he's bowing to is Viscountess on them. Sedley, a porcine empress, widow of three, with a soupçon of bigamy to flavour them. She mounted from a grocer's shop, I am told. Constitution has done everything for that woman. So it will everywhereit beats the world! Now he's on all-fours to Lady Rachel Stokes-our pure aristocracy; she walks as if

she were going through a doorway, and couldn't risk an eyelid. I'd like to see her tempting St. Anthony. That's little Wreckham's wife: she's had as many adventures as Gil Blas before he entered the Duke of Lerma's service." He reviewed several ladies, certainly not very witty when malignant, as I remembered my father to have said of him. "The style of your Englishwoman is to keep the nose exactly at one elevation, to show you're born to it. They daren't run a gamut, these women. These English women are a fiction! The model of them is the nursery-miss, but they're like the names of true lovers cut on the bark of a tree -awfully stiff and longitudinal with the advance of time. We've our Lady Jezebels, my boy! They're in the pay of the bishops, or the police, to make vice hideous. The rest do the same for virtue, and get their pay for it somewhere, I don't doubt; perhaps from the newspapers, to keep up the fiction. you, these Englishwomen have either no life at all in them, or they're nothing but animal life. 'Gad, how they dizen themselves! They've no other use for their fingers. The wealth of this country's frightful!"

Jorian seemed annoyed that he could not excite me to defend my countrywomen; but I had begun to see that there was no necessity for the sanguine to encounter the bilious on their behalf, and was myself inclined to be critical. Besides, I was engaged in watching my father, whose bearing towards the ladies he accosted did not dissatisfy my critical taste, though I had repeated

fears of seeing him overdo it. He summoned me to an introduction to the Countess Szezedy, a merry little Hungarian dame.

"So," said she at once, speaking German, "you are to marry the romantic head, the Princess Ottilia of Eppenwelzen! I know her well. I have met her in Vienna. Schöne Seele and bas bleu! It's just those that are won with a duel. I know Prince Otto too." She prattled away, and asked me whether the marriage was to take place in the summer. I was too astounded to answer.

- " No date is yet fixed," my father struck in.
- "It's the talk of London," she said.

Before I could demand explanations of my father with regard to this terrible rumour involving Ottilia, I found myself in the box of the City widow, Lady Sampleman, a grievous person, of the complexion of the autumnal bramble-leaf, whose first words were: "Ah! the young suitor! And how is our German princess?" I had to reply that the theme was more of German princes than princesses in England. "Oh! but," said she, "you are having a-shall I call it-national revenge on them? 'I will take one of your princesses,' says you; and as soon as said done! I'm dying for a sight of her portrait. Captain DeWitt declares her heavenly -I mean, he says she is fair and nice, quite a ladythat of course! And never mind her not being rich. You can do the decoration to the match. H'm." she perused my features; "pale! Lovelorn? Excuse an old friend of your father's. One of his very oldest, I'd say, if it didn't impugn. As such, proud of your alliance. I am. I speak of it everywhere—everywhere."

Here she dramatized her circulation of the gossip. "'Have you heard the news?' 'No, what?' 'Fitz-George's son marries a princess of the German realm.' Indeed!' 'True as gospel.' 'And how soon?' 'In a month; and now you will see the dear, neglected man command the Court . . .'"

I looked at my father: I felt stifling with confusion and rage. He leant over to her, imparting some ecstatic news about a great lady having determined to call on her to regulate the affairs of an approaching grand ball, and under cover of this we escaped.

"If it were not," said he, "for the Chassediane—you are aware, Richie, poor Jorian is lost to her?—he has fallen at her quicksilver feet. She is now in London. Half the poor fellow's income expended in bouquets! Her portrait, in the character of the widow Lefourbe, has become a part of his dressing apparatus; he shaves fronting her play-bill. His first real affaire de cœur, and he is forty-five! So he is taken in the stomach. That is why love is such a dangerous malady for middle-age. As I said, but for Jenny Chassediane, our Sampleman would be the fortune for Jorian. I have hinted it on both sides. Women, Richie, are cleverer than the illustrious Lord Nelson in not seeing what their inclinations decline to see, and Jorian would do

me any service in the world except that one. You are restless, my son?"

I begged permission to quit the house, and wait for him outside. He, in return, begged me most urgently to allow myself to be introduced to Lady Edbury, the stepmother of Lord Destrier, now Marquis of Edbury; and, using conversational pressure, he adjured me not to slight this lady, adding, with more significance than the words conveyed, "I am taking the tide, Richie." The tide took me, and I bowed to a lady of impressive languor, pale and young, with pleasant manners, showing her character in outline, like a glove on the hand, but little of its quality. She accused my father of coming direct from 'that person's' box. He replied that he never forsook old friends. "You should," was her rejoinder. It suggested to me an image of one of the sister Fates cutting a thread.

My heart sank when, from Lady Edbury too, I heard the allusion to Germany and its princess. "Some one told me she was dark?"

"Blonde," my father corrected the report.

Lady Edbury "thought it singular for a German woman of the Blood to be a brunette. They had not much dark mixture among them, particularly in the north. Her name? She had forgotten the name of the princess."

My father repeated: "The Princess Ottilia, Princess of Eppenwelzen-Sarkeld."

"Brunette, you say?"



- "The purest blonde."
- " A complexion?"
- "A complexion to dazzle the righteous!"

Lady Edbury threw a flying glance in a mirror: "The unrighteous you leave to us then?"

They bandied the weariful shuttlecock of gallantry. I bowed and fled. My excuse was that I had seen Anna Penrhys in an upper tier of boxes, and I made my way to her, doubting how I should be welcomed. happy woman is a German princess, we hear!" she set me shivering. Her welcome was perfectly unreserved and friendly. She asked the name of the lady whose box I had quitted, and after bending her opera-glass on it for a moment, said with a certain air of satisfaction: "She is young;" which led me to guess that Lady Edbury was reputed to be Anna's successor; but why the latter should be flattered by the former's youth was one of the mysteries for me then. Her aunt was awakened from sleep by the mention of my name. "Is the man here?" she exclaimed, starting. Anna smiled. and talked to me of my father, saying that she was glad to see me at his right hand, for he had a hard battle to fight. She spoke of him with affectionate interest in his fortunes; no better proof of his generosity as well as hers could have been given me. I promised her heartily I would not be guilty of letting our intimacy drop, and handed the ladies down to the crushroom, where I saw my father leading Lady Edbury to her carriage, much observed. Destrier, the young

marquis, coming in to meet the procession from other haunts, linked his arm to his friend Witlington's, and said something in my hearing of old 'Duke Fitz,' which provoked, I fancied, signs of amusement equivalent to tittering in a small ring of the select assembly. Lady Sampleman's carriage was called. "Another victim," said a voice. Anna Penrhys walked straight out to find her footman and carriage for herself.

I stood alone in the street, wondering, fretting, filled with a variety of ugly sensations, when my father joined me humming an air of the opera. "I was looking for Jorian, Richie. He had our Sampleman under his charge. He is off to the Chassediane. Well! And well. Richie, you could not bear the absence from your dada? You find me in full sail on the tide. I am at home, if our fortunes demand it, in a little German principality, but there is," he threw out his chest, "a breadth in London; nowhere else do I breathe with absolute freedom—so largely: and this is my battlefield. By the way, Lady Edbury accounts you complete; which is no more to say than that she is a woman of taste. The instance: she positively would not notice that you wear a dress-coat of a foreign cut. Correct it to-morrow; my tailor shall wait on you. I meant to point out to you that when a London woman has not taken note of that, the face and the man have made the right impression on her. Richie, dear boy, how shall I speak the delight I have in seeing you! My arm in yours, old Richie! strolling home from the fashion: VOL. II. 37

this seems to me what I dreamt of! All in sound health at the Grange? She too, the best of women?"

"I have come on very particular business," I interposed briefly.

He replied, "I am alive to you, Richie; speak."

"The squire has seen my bankers' book. He thinks I've been drawing rather wildly: no doubt he's right. He wants some sort of explanation. He consents to an interview with you. I have come to ask you to go down to him, sir."

"To-morrow morning, without an hour's delay, my dear boy. Very agreeable will be the sight of old Riversley. And in the daylight!"

"He prefers to meet you at Bulsted. Captain Bulsted offers his house for the purpose. I have to warn you, sir, that we stand in a very exceptional position. The squire insists upon having a full account of the money rendered to him."

"I invite him to London, Richie. I refer him to Dettermain and Newson. I request him to compute the value of a princess."

"You are aware that he will not come to your invitation."

"Tell me, then, how is he to understand what I have established by the expenditure, my son? I refer him to Dettermain and Newson."

"But you must know that he sets his face against legal proceedings involving exposure."

"But surely, Richie, exposure is the very thing we

court. The innocent, the unjustly treated, court it. We would be talked about; you shall hear of us! And into the bargain an hereditary princess. Upon my faith, Mr. Beltham, I think you have mighty little to complain of."

My temper was beginning to chafe at the curb. "As regards any feeling about the money, personally, sir, you know I have none. But I must speak of one thing. I have heard to-night, I confess with as much astonishment as grief, the name . . . I could not have guessed that I should hear the princess's name associated with mine, and quite openly."

- "As a matter of course." He nodded, and struck out a hand in wavy motion.
- "Well, sir, if you can't feel for her or her family, be good enough to think of me, and remember that I object to it."
- "For you all," said he, buoyantly; "I feel for you all, and I will act for you all. I bring the princess to your arms, my dear boy. You have written me word that the squire gives her a royal dowry—have you not? My combinations permit of no escape to any one of you. Nay, 'tis done. I think for you, I feel for you, I act for you. By heaven, you shall be happy! Sigh, Richie, sigh; your destiny is now entrusted to me!"

"I dare say I'm wasting my breath, sir, but I protest against false pretences. You know well that you have made use of the princess's name for your own purposes."

"Most indubitably, Richie, I have: and are they not yours? I must have social authority to succeed in our main enterprise. Possibly the princess's name serves for a temporary chandelier to cast light on us. She belongs to us. For her sake we are bringing the house she enters into order. Thus, Richie, I could tell Mr. Beltham: you and he supply the money, the princess the name, and I the energy, the skilfulness. and the estimable cause. I pay the princess for the use of her name with the dowry, which is royal: I pay you with the princess, who is royal too; and I. Richie, am paid by your happiness most royally. Together, it is past contest that we win.—Here, my little one," he said to a woman, and dropped a piece of gold into her hand. "on condition that you go straight home." woman thanked him and promised. - "As I was observing, we are in the very tide of success. Curious! I have a slight inclination to melancholv. Success. quotha? Why, hundreds before us have paced the identical way homeward at night under these lamps between the mansions and the park. The bare thought makes them resemble a double line of undertakers. The tomb is down there at the end of them—costly or not. At the age of four, on my birthday, I was informed that my mother lay dead in her bed. I remember to this day my astonishment at her not moving. 'Her heart is broken,' my old nurse said. To me she appeared intact. Her sister took possession of me, and of her papers, and the wedding-ring-now in the custody

of Dettermain and Newson-together with the portraits of both my parents; and she, poor soul, to sustain me, as I verily believe-she had a great idea of my never asking unprofitably for anything in life-bartered the most corroborative of the testificatory documents, which would now make the establishment of my case a comparatively light task. Have I never spoken to you of my boyhood? My maternal uncle was a singingmaster and master of elecution. I am indebted to him for the cultivation of my voice. He taught me an effective delivery of my sentences. The English of a book of his called The Speaker is still to my mind a model of elegance. Remittances of money came to him from an unknown quarter; and, with a break or two, have come ever since up to this period. My old nurse-heaven bless her!-resumed the occupation of washing. I have stood by her tub, Richie, blowing bubbles and listening to her prophecies of my exalted fortune for hours. On my honour, I doubt, I seriously doubt, if I have ever been happier. I depend just now -I have to avow it to you-slightly upon stimulants . . . of a perfectly innocuous character. Mrs. Waddy will allow me a pint of champagne. The truth is, Richie—you see these two or three poor pensioners of mine, honi soit qui mal y pense-my mother has had hard names thrown at her. The stones of these streets cry out to me to have her vindicated. I am not tired; but I want my wine."

He repeated several times before he reached his

house-door that he wanted his wine, in a manner to be almost alarming. His unwonted effort of memory, the singular pictures of him which it had flashed before me, and a sort of impatient compassion, made me forget my I saw him take his restorative at one draught. He lay down on a sofa, and his valet drew his boots off and threw a cloak over him. Lying there, he wished me gaily good-night. Mrs. Waddy told me that he had adopted this system of sleeping for the last month. "Bless you, as many people call on him at night now as in the day," she said: and I was induced to suppose he had some connection with the Press. She had implicit faith in his powers of constitution, and would affirm that he had been the death of dozens whom the attraction had duped to imitate his habits. "He is now a Field-Marshal on his campaign." She betrayed a twinkle of humour. He must himself have favoured her with that remark. The report of the house-door frequently shutting in the night suggested the passage of his aides-de-camp.

Early in the morning, I found him pacing through the open doors of the dining-room and the library dictating to a secretary at a desk, now and then tossing a word to Dettermain and Newson's chief clerk. The floor was strewn with journals. He wore Hessian boots; a voluminous black cloak hung loosely from his shoulders.

"I am just settling the evening papers," he said, after greeting me, with a show of formality in his

warmth; and immediately added, "That will do, Mr. Jopson. Put in a note—'Mr. Harry Lepel Richmond of Riversley and Twn-y-glas, my son, takes no step to official distinction in his native land save through the ordinary Parliamentary channels.' Your pardon, Richie; presently. I am replying to a morning paper."

"What's this? Why print my name?" I cried.

"Merely the correction of an error. I have to insist, my dear boy, that you claim no privileges: you are apart from them. Mr. Jopson, I beseech you, not a minute's delay in delivering that. Fetch me from the printer's my pamphlet this afternoon. Mr. Jacobs, my compliments to Dettermain and Newson: I request them to open proceedings instanter, and let the world know of it. Good-morning, gentlemen."

And now, turning to me, my father fenced me with the whole weight of his sententious volubility, which was the force of a river. Why did my name appear in the papers? Because I was his son. But he assured me that he carefully separated me from public companionship with his fortunes, and placed me on the side of my grandfather, as a plain gentleman of England, the heir of the most colossal wealth possible in the country.

"I dis-sociate you from me, Richie, do you see? I cause it to be declared that you need, on no account, lean on me. Jopson will bring you my pamphlet—my Declaration of Rights—to peruse. In the Press, in Literature, at Law, and on social ground, I meet the enemy, and I claim my own; by heaven, I do! And I

will down to the squire for a distraction, if you esteem it necessary, certainly. Half-a-dozen words to him. Why, do you maintain him to be insensible to a title for you? No, no. And ask my friends. I refer him to any dozen of my friends to convince him I have the prize almost in my possession. Why, dear boy, I have witnesses, living witnesses, to the ceremony. Am I, tell me, to be deprived of money now, once again, for the eleventh time? Oh! And put aside my duty to you, I protest I am bound in duty to her who bore me—you have seen her miniature: how lovely that dear woman was! how gentle!—bound in duty to her to clear her good name. This does not affect you"

- "Oh, but it does," he allowed me to plead.
- "Ay, through your love for your dada."

He shook me by both hands. I was touched with pity, and at the same time in doubt whether it was not an actor that swayed me; for I was discontented, and could not speak my discontent; I was overborne, overflowed. His evasion of the matter of my objections relating to the princess I felt to be a palpable piece of artfulness, but I had to acknowledge to myself that I knew what his argument would be, and how overwhelmingly his defence of it would spring forth. My cowardice shrank from provoking a recurrence to the theme. In fact, I submitted consciously to his masterful fluency and emotional power, and so I was carried on the tide with him, remaining in London several days to witness that I was not the only one. My father,

admitting that money served him in his conquest of society, and defying any other man to do as much with it as he did, replied to a desperate insinuation of mine, "This money I spend, I am actually putting out to interest as much as, or more than, your grandad." He murmured confidentially, "I have alarmed the Government. Indeed, I have warrant for saying I am in communication with its agents. They are bribing me; they are positively bribing me, Richie. I receive my stipend annually. They are mighty discreet. So am I. But I push them hard. I take what they offer: I renounce none of my claims."

Janet wrote that it would be prudent for me to return.

"I am prepared," my father said. "I have only to meet Mr. Beltham in a room—I stipulate that it shall be between square walls—to win him. The squire to back us, Richie, we have command of the entire world. His wealth, and my good cause, and your illustrious union—by the way, it is announced definitively in this morning's paper."

Dismayed, I asked what was announced.

"Read," said he. "This will be something to hand to Mr. Beltham at our meeting. I might trace it to one of the embassies, Imperial or Royal. No matter—there it is."

I read a paragraph in which Ottilia's name and titles were set down; then followed mine and my wealthy heirship, and—woe was me in the perusing of it!—a

roundabout vindication of me as one not likely to be ranked as the first of English commoners who had gained the hand of an hereditary foreign princess, though it was undoubtedly in the light of a commoner that I was most open to the congratulations of my countrymen upon my unparalleled felicity. A display of historical erudition cited the noble inferiors by birth who had caught princesses to their arms—Charles, Humphrey, William, John. Unto this list a later Harry!

The paragraph closed by fixing the nuptials to take place before the end of the season.

I looked at my father to try a struggle with him. The whole man was efflorescent.

"Can't it be stopped?" I implored him.

He signified the impossibility in a burst of gesticulations, motions of the mouth, smiling frowns; various patterns of an absolute negative beating down opposition.

"Things printed can never be stopped, Richie. Our Jorian compares them to babies baptized. They have a soul from that moment, and go on for ever!— an admirable word of Jorian's. And a word to you, Richie. Will you swear to me by the veracity of your lover's heart, that paragraph affords you no satisfaction? He cannot swear it!" my father exclaimed, seeing me swing my shoulder round, and he made me feel that it would have been a false oath if I had sworn it. But I could have sworn that I had rather we two were at

the bottom of the sea than that it should come under the princess's eyes. I read it again. It was in print. It looked like reality. It was at least the realization of my dream. But this played traitor and accused me of being crowned with no more than a dream. The sole practical thing I could do was to insist on our starting for Riversley immediately, to make sure of my own position. "Name your hour, Richie," my father said confidently: and we waited.

A rather plainer view of my father's position, as I inclined to think, was afforded to me one morning at his breakfast-table, by a conversation between him and Jorian DeWitt, who brought me a twisted pink note from Mdlle. Chassediane, the which he delivered with the air of a dog made to disgorge a bone, and he was very cool to me indeed. The cutlets of Alphonse were subject to snappish criticism. "I assume," he said, "the fellow knew I was coming?"

"He saw it in my handwriting of yesterday," replied my father. "But be just to him, acknowledge that he is one of the few that perform their daily duties with a tender conscience."

"This English climate has bedevilled the fellow! He peppers his dishes like a mongrel Indian reared on mangoes."

"Ring him up, ring him up, Jorian. All I beg of you is not to disgust him with life, for he quits any service in the world to come to me, and, in fact, he suits me."



"Exactly so: you spoil him."

My father shrugged. "The state of the case is that your stomach is growing delicate, friend Jorian."

- "The actual state of the case being, that my palate was never keener, and consequently my stomach knows its business."
- "You should have tried the cold turbot with oil and capers."
- "Your man had better stick to buttered eggs, in my opinion."
 - "Say, porridge!"
- "No, I'll be hanged if I think he's equal to a bowl of porridge."
 - "Carème might have confessed to the same!"
- "With this difference," cried Jorian in a heat, "that he would never have allowed the thought of any of your barbarous messes to occur to a man at table. Let me tell you, Roy, you astonish me: up till now I have never known you guilty of the bad taste of defending a bad dish on your own board."
- "Then you will the more readily pardon me, Jorian."
- "Oh, I pardon you," Jorian sneered, tripped to the carpet by such ignoble mildness. "A breakfast is no great loss."

My father assured him he would have a serious conversation with Alphonse, for whom he apologized by saying that Alphonse had not, to his knowledge, served as hospital cook anywhere, and was therefore quite

possibly not sufficiently solicitous for appetites and digestions of invalids.

Jorian threw back his head as though to discharge a spiteful sarcasm with good aim; but turning to me, said, "Harry, the thing must be done; your father must marry. Notoriety is the season for a pick and choice of the wealthiest and the loveliest. I refuse to act the part of warming-pan any longer; I refuse point blank. It's not a personal feeling on my part; my advice is that of a disinterested friend, and I tell you candidly, Roy, set aside the absurd exhibition of my dancing attendance on that last rose of Guildhall,—egad, the alderman went like summer, and left us the very picture of a fruity autumn,—I say you can't keep her hanging on the tree of fond expectation for ever. She'll drop."

- "Catch her, Jorian; you are on guard."
- "Upwards of three hundred thousand, if a penny, Roy Richmond! Who? I? I am not a fortune-hunter."
 - "Nor am I, friend Jorian."
- "No, it's because you're not thorough: you'll fall between the stools."

My father remarked that he should visit this upon Mr. Alphonse.

"You shook off that fine Welsh girl, and she was in your hand—the act of a madman!" Jorian continued. "You're getting older: the day will come when you're a flat excitement. You know the first Lady Edbury spoilt one of your best chances when you had the market. Now you're trifling with the second. She's the head of the Light Brigade, but you might fix her down, if she's not too much in debt. You're not at the end of your run, I dare say. Only, my good Roy, let me tell you, in life you mustn't wait for the prize of the race till you touch the goal—if you prefer metaphor. You generally come forward about every seven years or so. Add on another seven, and women'll begin to think. You can't beat time, mon Roy."

"So," said my father, "I touch the goal, and women begin to think, and I can't beat time to them. Jorian, your mind is in a state of confusion. I do not marry."

- "Then, Roy Richmond, hear what a friend says . . . "
- "I do not marry, Jorian, and you know my reasons."
- "Sentiments!"
- "They are a part of my life."
- "Just as I remarked, you are not thorough. You have genius and courage out of proportion, and you are a dead failure, Roy; because, no sooner have you got all Covent Garden before you for the fourth or fifth time, than in go your hands into your pockets, and you say—No, there's an apple I can't have, so I'll none of these; and, by the way, the apple must be tolerably withered by this time. And you know perfectly well, (for you don't lack common sense at a shaking, Roy Richmond,) that you're guilty of simple madness in refusing to make the best of your situation. You haven't to be taught what money means. With money

—and a wife to take care of it, mind you—you are pre-eminently the man for which you want to be recognized. Without it—Harry'll excuse me, I must speak plainly—you're a sort of a spectacle of a bob-cherry, down on your luck, up on your luck, and getting dead stale and never bitten; a familiar curiosity!" Jorian added, "Oh, by Jingo! it's not nice to think of."

My father said: "Harry, I am sure, will excuse you for talking, in your extreme friendliness, of matters that he and I have not—and they interest us deeply—yet thought fit to discuss. And you may take my word for it, Jorian, that I will give Alphonse his medical dose. I am quite of your opinion that the kings of cooks require it occasionally. Harry will inform us of Mdlle. Chassediane's commands."

The contents of the letter permitted me to read it aloud. She desired to know how she could be amused on the Sunday.

"We will undertake it," said my father. "I depute the arrangements to you, Jorian. Respect the prejudices, and avoid collisions, that is all."

Captain DeWitt became by convenient stages cheerful, after the pink slip of paper had been made common property, and from a seriously-advising friend, in his state of spite, relapsed to the idle and shadow-like associate, when pleased. I had to thank him for the gift of fresh perceptions. Surely it would be as well if my father could get a woman of fortune to take care of him!

We had at my request a consultation with Dettermain and Newson on the eve of the journey to Riversley, Temple and Jorian DeWitt assisting. Strange documentary evidence was unfolded and compared with the date of a royal decree: affidavits of persons now dead; a ring, the ring; fans, and lace, and handkerchiefs with notable initials; jewelry stamped 'To the Divine Anastasia' from an adoring Christian name; old brown letters that shrieked 'wife' when 'charmer' seemed to have palled; oaths of fidelity ran through them like bass notes. Jorian held up the discoloured sheets of ancient paper, saying: "Here you behold the mummy of the villain Love!" Such love as it was-the love of the privileged butcher for the lamb. The burden of the letters, put in epigram, was rattlesnake and bird. A narrative of Anastasia's sister, Elizabeth, signed and sealed, with names of witnesses appended, related in brief, bald English the history of the events which had killed her. It warmed pathetically when dwelling on the writer's necessity to part with letters and papers of greater moment that she might be enabled to sustain and educate her sister's child. She named the certificate: she swore to the tampering with witnesses. number and exact indication of the house where the ceremony took place was stated—a house in Soho; the date was given, and the incident on that night of the rape of the beautiful Miss Armett by mad Lord Beaumaris at the theatre doors, aided by masked ruffians, after Anastasia's performance of Zamira.

"There are witnesses I know to be still living, Mr. Temple," my father said, seeing the young student-at-law silent and observant. "One of them I have under my hand; I feed him. Listen to this."

He read two or three insufferable sentences from one of the love-epistles, and broke down. I was ushered aside by a member of the firm to inspect an instrument prepared to bind me as surety for the costs of the appeal. I signed it. We quitted the attorney's office convinced (I speak of Temple and myself) that we had seen the shadow of something.

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CHAPTER XIX.

MY FATHER'S MEETING WITH MY GRANDFATHER.

My father's pleasure on the day of our journey to Bulsted was to drive me out of London on a lofty open chariot, with which he made the circuit of the fashionable districts, and caused innumerable heads to turn. I would have preferred to go the way of other men, to be unnoticed, but I was subject to an occasional glowing of undefined satisfaction in the observance of the universally acknowledged harmony existing between his pretensions, his tastes and habits, and his person. He contrived by I know not what persuasiveness and simplicity of manner and speech to banish from me the idea that he was engaged in playing a high stake; and though I knew it, and he more than once admitted it, there was an ease and mastery about him that afforded me some degree of positive comfort still. I was still most securely attached to his fortunes. Supposing the ghost of dead Hector to have hung over his body when the inflamed son of Peleus whirled him at his chariot wheels round Troy, he would, with his natural passions sobered by Erebus, have had some of my reflections upon force and fate, and my partial sense of exhilaration in the tremendous speed of the course during the whole of the period my father termed his Grand Parade. I showed just such acquiescence or resistance as were superinduced by the variations of the ground. Otherwise I was spell-bound; and beyond interdicting any further public mention of my name or the princess's, I did nothing to thwart him. It would have been no light matter.

We struck a station at a point half-way down to Bulsted, and found little Kiomi there, thunder in her brows, carrying a bundle, and purchasing a railwayticket, not to travel in our direction. She gave me the singular answer that she could not tell me where her people were; nor would she tell me whither she was going, alone, and by rail. I chanced to speak of Heriot. One of her sheet-lightning flashes shot out. "He won't be at Bulsted," she said, as if that had a significance. I let her know we were invited to Bulsted. "Oh. she's at home;" Kiomi blinked, and her features twitched like whipcord. The reply came quick and keen to my thought. I suspected a mishap to one or the other of my friends, little guessing which one claimed my sympathy. My father desired her to enlighten him upon his fortune at an extreme corner of the station, where martins flew into sand-holes, which was his device to set her up in money for her journey. After we had seen her off, he spoke of her.

and puffed, remarking that he had his fears; but he did not specify them. I saw that she was possessed by some one of her furies. That girl's face had the art of making me forget beautiful women, and what beauty was by comparison.

It happened that the squire came across us as we were rounding the slope of larch and fir plantation near a part of the Riversley hollows, leading to the upper heath-land, where, behind a semicircle of birches, Bulsted lay. He was on horseback, and called hoarsely to the captain's coachman, who was driving us, to pull up. "Here, Harry," he sung out to me, in the same rough voice, "I don't see why we should bother Captain William. It's a bit of business, not pleasure. I've got the book in my pocket. You ask—is it convenient to step into my bailiff's cottage hard by, and run through it? Ten minutes'll tell me all I want to know. I want it done with. Ask."

My father stood up and bowed, bareheaded.

My grandfather struck his hat and bobbed.

- "Mr. Beltham, I trust I see you well."
- "Better, sir, when I've got rid of a damned unpleasant bit o' business."
 - "I offer you my hearty assistance."
- "Do you? Then step down and come into my bailiff's."
 - "I come, sir."

My father alighted from the carriage. The squire cast his gouty leg to be quit of his horse, but not in

time to check my father's advances and ejaculations of condolence.

"Gout, Mr. Beltham is a little too much a proof to us of a long line of ancestry."

His hand and arm were raised in the form of a splint to support the squire, who glared back over his cheek-bone, horrified that he could not escape the contact, and in too great pain from arthritic throes to protest: he resembled a burglar surprised by justice. "What infernal nonsense... fellow talking now?" I heard him mutter between his hoppings and dancings, with one foot in the stirrup and a toe to earth, the enemy at his heel, and his inclination half bent upon swinging to the saddle again. I went to relieve him. "Damn!...Oh, it's you," said he.

The squire directed Uberly, his groom, to walk his horse up and down the turf fronting young Tom Eckerthy's cottage, and me to remain where I was; then hobbled up to the door, followed at a leisurely march by my father. The door opened. My father swept the old man in before him, with a bow and flourish that admitted of no contradiction, and the door closed on them. I caught a glimpse of Uberly screwing his wrinkles in a queer grimace, while he worked his left eye and thumb expressively towards the cottage, by way of communicating his mind to Samuel, Captain Bulsted's coachman; and I became quite of his opinion as to the nature of the meeting, that it was comical and not likely to lead to much. I thought of the princess and

of my hope of her depending upon such an interview as this. From that hour when I stepped on the sands of the Continent to the day of my quitting them, I had been folded in a dream: I had stretched my hand to the highest things of earth, and here now was the retributive material money-question, like a keen scythe-blade!

The cottage-door continued shut. The heaths were darkening. I heard a noise of wheels, and presently the unmistakable voice of Janet, saying, "That must be Harry." She was driving my aunt Dorothy. Both of them hushed at hearing that the momentous duel was in progress. Janet's first thought was of the squire. "I won't have him ride home in the dark," she said, and ordered Uberly to walk the horse home. The ladies had a ladies' altercation before Janet would permit my aunt to yield her place and proceed on foot, accompanied by me. Naturally the best driver of the two kept the whip. I told Samuel to go on to Bulsted, with word that we were coming; and Janet, nodding bluntly, agreed to direct my father as to where he might expect to find me on the Riversley road. My aunt Dorothy and I went ahead slowly: at her request I struck a pathway to avoid the pony-carriage, which was soon audible; and when Janet, chattering to the squire, had gone by, we turned back to intercept my father. He was speechless at the sight of Dorothy Beltham. At his solicitation she consented to meet him next day; his account of the result of the interview was unintelligible to her as well as to me. Even after leaving her at the park-gates, I could get nothing definite from him, save that all was well, and that the squire was eminently practical; but he believed he had done an excellent evening's work. "Yes," said he, rubbing his hands, "excellent! making due allowances for the emphatically commoner's mind we have to deal with." And then to change the subject he dilated on that strange story of the man who, an enormous number of years back in the date of the world's history, carried his little son on his shoulders one night when the winds were not so boisterous, though we were deeper in winter, along the identical road we traversed, between the gorse-mounds, across the heaths, with yonder remembered fir-tree clump in sight and the waste-water visible to footfarers rounding under the firs. At night-time he vowed that, as far as Nature permitted it, he had satisfied the squire-"completely satisfied him, I mean," he said, to give me sound sleep. "No doubt of it; no doubt of it, Richie." won Julia's heart straight off, and Captain Bulsted's "Now I know the man I've profound admiration. always been adoring since you were so high, Harry," said she. Captain Bulsted sighed: "Your husband bows to your high good taste, my dear. They relished him sincerely, and between them and him I suffered myself to be dandled once more into a state of credulity, until I saw my aunt Dorothy in the afternoon subsequent to the appointed meeting. His deep respect and esteem

for her had stayed him from answering any of her questions falsely. To that extent he had been veracious. It appeared that, driven hard by the squire, who would have no waving of flags and lighting of fireworks in a matter of business, and whose "commoner's mind" chafed sturdily at a hint of the necessity for lavish outlays where there was a princess to win, he had rallied on the fiction that many of the cheques, standing for the bulk of the sums expended, were moneys borrowed by him of me, which he designed to repay, and was prepared to repay instantly-could in fact, the squire demanding it, repay as it were on the spot; for behold, these borrowed moneys were not spent; they were moneys invested in undertakings, put out to high rates of interest; moneys that perhaps it would not be advisable to call in without a season of delay; still, if Mr. Beltham, acting for his grandson and heir, insisted, it should be done. The moneys had been borrowed purely to invest them with profit on my behalf: a gentleman's word of honour was pledged to it.

The squire grimly gave him a couple of months to make it good.

Dorothy Beltham and my father were together for about an hour at Eckerthy's farm. She let my father kiss her hand when he was bending to take his farewell of her, but held her face away. He was in manifest distress, hardly master of his voice, begged me to come to him soon, and bowing, with "God bless you, madam, my friend on earth!" turned his heel, bearing his elastic

frame lamentably. A sad or a culprit air did not befit him: one reckoned up his foibles and errors when seeing him under a partly-beaten aspect. At least, I did; not my dear aunt, who was compassionate of him, however thoroughly she condemned his ruinous extravagance, and the shifts and evasions it put him to. She feared that, instead of mending the difficulty, he had postponed merely to exaggerate it in the squire's mind; and she was now of opinion that the bringing him down to meet the squire was very bad policy, likely to result in danger to my happiness; for, if the money should not be forthcoming on the date named, all my father's faults would be transferred to me as his accomplice, both in the original wastefulness and the subterfuges invented to conceal it. I recollected that a sum of money had really been sunk in Prince Ernest's coal-My aunt said she hoped for the best.

Mounting the heaths, we looked back on the long yellow road, where the carriage conveying my father to the railway-station was visible, and talked of him, and of the elements of antique tragedy in his history, which were at that period, let me say, precisely what my incessant mental efforts were strained to expel from the idea of our human life. The individual's freedom was my tenet of faith; but pity pleaded for him that he was well-nigh irresponsible, was shamefully sinned against at his birth, one who could charge the gods with vindictiveness, and complain of the persecution of natal Furies. My aunt Dorothy advised me to take him

under my charge, and sell his house and furniture, make him live in bachelor chambers with his faithful waitingwoman and a single man-servant.

"He will want money even to do that," I remarked. She murmured, "Is there not some annual income paid to him?"

Her quick delicacy made her redden in alluding so closely to his personal affairs, and I loved her for the nice feeling. "It was not much," I said. The miserable attempt to repair the wrongs done to him with this small annuity angered me; and I remembered, little pleased, the foolish expectations he founded on this secret acknowledgment of the justice of his claims. "We won't talk of it," I pursued. "I wish he had never touched it. I shall interdict him."

- "You would let him pay debts with it, Harry?"
- "I am not sure, aunty, that he does not incur a greater debt by accepting it."
- "One's wish would be that he might not ever be in need of it."
 - "Ay, or never be caring to find the key of it."
 - "That must be waste of time," she said.

I meant something else, but it was useless to tell her so.

CHAPTER XX.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SPLENDOURS AND PERPLEXITIES OF MY FATHER'S GRAND PARADE.

Janet, in reply to our inquiries as to the condition of the squire's temper, pointed out in the newspaper a notification of a grand public ball to be given by my father, the first of a series of three, and said that the squire had seen it and shrugged. She thought there was no positive cause for alarm, even though my father should fail of his word; but expressed her view decidedly that it was an unfortunate move to bring him between the squire and me, and so she blamed Captain Bulsted. This was partly for the reason that the captain and his wife, charmed by my father, were for advocating his merits at the squire's table: our ingenuity was ludicrously taxed to mystify him on the subject of their extravagant eulogies. They told him they had been invited, and were going to the great London balls.

- "Subscription balls?" asked the squire.
- " No, sir," rejoined the captain.
- "Tradesmen's balls, d'ye call 'em, then?"

- "No, sir; they are balls given by a distinguished gentleman."
- "Take care it's not another name for tradesmen's balls, William."
 - "I do not attend tradesmen's balls, sir."
 - "Take care o' that, William."

The captain was very angry. "What," said he, turning to us, "what does the squire mean by telling an officer of the Royal Navy that he is conducting his wife to a tradesmen's ball?"

Julia threatened malicious doings for the insult. She and the squire had a controversy upon the explication of the word gentleman, she describing my father's appearance and manners to the life. "Now listen to me, squire. A gentleman, I say, is one you'd say, if he wasn't born a duke, he ought to have been, and more shame to the title! He turns the key of a lady's heart with a twinkle of his eye. He's never mean—what he has is yours. He's a true friend; and if he doesn't keep his word, you know in a jiffy it's the fault of affairs; and stands about five feet eleven: he's a full-blown man;" and so forth.

The squire listened, and perspired at finding the object of his abhorrence crowned thus in the unassailable realms of the abstract. Julia might have done it more elegantly; but her husband was rapturous over her skill in portraiture, and he added: "That's a gentleman, squire; and that's a man pretty sure to be abused by half the world."

- "Three-quarters, William," said the squire; "there's about the computation for your gentleman's creditors, I suspect."
- "Ay, sir; well," returned the captain, to whom this kind of fencing in the dark was an affliction, "we make it up in quality, in quality."
- "I'll be bound you do," said the squire; "and so you will so long as you're only asked to dance to the other poor devils' fiddling."

Captain Bulsted bowed. "The last word to you, squire."

The squire nodded. "I'll hand it to your wife, William."

Julia took it graciously. "A perfect gentleman! perfect! confound his enemies!"

- "Why, ma'am, you might keep from swearing," the squire bawled.
- "La! squire," said she, "why, don't you know the National Anthem?"
- "National Anthem, ma'am! and a fellow, a velvet-tongued—confound him, if you like."
- "And where's my last word, if you please?" Julia jumped up, and dropped a provoking curtsey.
- "You silly old grandada!" said Janet, going round to him; "don't you see the cunning woman wants to dress you in our garments, and means to boast of it to us while you're finishing your wine?"

The old man fondled her. I could have done the same, she bent over him with such homely sweetness.

- "One comfort, you won't go to these gingerbread balls," he said.
 - "I'm not invited," she moaned comically.
- "No; nor shan't be, while I can keep you out of bad company."
 - "But, grandada, I do like dancing."
 - "Dance away, my dear; I've no objection."
 - "But where's the music?"
 - "Oh, you can always have music."
 - "But where are my partners?"

The squire pointed at me.

- "You don't want more than one at a time, eh?" He corrected his error: "No, the fellow's engaged in another quadrille. Mind you, Miss Janet, he shall dance to your tune yet. D'ye hear, sir?" The irritation excited by Captain Bulsted and Julia broke out in fury. "Who's that fellow danced when Rome was burning?"
- "The Emperor Nero," said Janet. "He killed Harry's friend, Seneca, in the eighty-somethingth year of his age; an old man, and—hush, grandada!" She could not check him.
- "Hark you, Mr. Harry; dance your hardest up in town with your rips and reps, and the lot of ye; all very fine while the burning goes on: you won't see the fun of dancing on the ashes. A nice king of Rome Nero was next morning! By the Lord, if I couldn't swear you'll be down on your knees to an innocent fresh-hearted girl's worth five hundred of the crew

you're for partnering now while you've a penny for the piper."

Janet shut his mouth, kissed him, and held his wine up. He drank, and thumped the table. "We'll have parties here, too. The girl shall have her choice of partners: she shan't be kept in the back-ground by a young donkey. Take any six of your own age, and six sensible men, to try you by your chances. By George, the whole dozen 'd bring you in non-compos. You've only got the women on your side because of a smart face and figure."

Janet exclaimed indignantly, "Grandada, I'm offended with you;" and walked out on a high step.

"Come, if he has the women on his side," said Captain Bulsted, mildly.

"He'll be able to go partnering and gallopading as long as his banker 'll let him, William—like your gentleman! That's true. We shall soon see."

"I leave my character in your hands, sir," said I, rising. "If you would scold me in private, I should prefer it, on behalf of your guests; but I am bound to submit to your pleasure, and under any circumstances I remember, what you appear to forget, that you are my grandfather."

So saying, I followed the ladies. It was not the wisest of speeches, and happened, Captain Bulsted afterwards informed me, to be delivered in my father's manner, for the squire pronounced emphatically that he saw very little Beltham in me. The right course would

have been for me to ask him then and there whether I had his consent to start for Germany. But I was the sport of resentments and apprehensions; and, indeed, I should not have gone. I could not go without some title beyond that of the heir of great riches.

Janet kept out of my sight. I found myself strangely anxious to console her: less sympathetic, perhaps, than desirous to pour out my sympathy in her ear, which was of a very pretty shape, with a soft unpierced lobe. We danced together at the Riversley Ball, given by the squire on the night of my father's ball in London. Janet complimented me upon having attained wisdom. "Now we get on well," she said. "Grandada only wants to see us friendly, and feel that I am not neglected."

The old man, a martyr to what he considered due to his favourite, endured the horror of the ball until supper-time, and kept his eyes on us two. He forgot, or pretended to forget, my foreign engagement altogether, though the announcement in the newspapers was spoken of by Sir Roderick and Lady Ilchester and others.

"How do you like that?" he remarked to me, seeing her twirled away by one of the young Rubreys.

"She seems to like it, sir," I replied.

"Like it!" said he. "In my day you wouldn't have caught me letting the bloom be taken off the girl I cared for by a parcel o' scampish young dogs. Right in their arms! Look at her build. She's strong;

she's healthy; she goes round like a tower. If you want a girl to look like a princess!——"

His eulogies were not undeserved. But she danced as lightly and happily with Mr. Fred Rubrey as with Harry Richmond. I congratulated myself on her lack of sentiment. Later, when in London, where Mdlle. Jenny Chassediane challenged me to perilous sarabandes, I wished that Janet had ever so small a grain of sentiment, for a preservative to me. Ottilia glowed high and distant; she sent me no message; her image did not step between me and disorder. The whole structure of my idea of my superior nature seemed to be crumbling to fragments; and beginning to feel in despair that I was wretchedly like other men, I lost by degrees the sense of my hold on her. It struck me that my worst fears of the effect produced on the princess's mind by that last scene in the lake-palace must be true, and I abandoned hope. Temple thought she tried me too cruelly. Under these circumstances I became less and less resolutely disposed to renew the forlorn conflict with my father concerning his prodigal way of living. "Let it last as long as I have a penny to support him!" He said that Dettermain and Newson I exclaimed. were now urging on his case with the utmost despatch in order to keep pace with him, but that the case relied for its life on his preserving a great appearance. handed me his division of our twin cheque-books, telling me he preferred to depend on his son for supplies, and I was in the mood to think this a partial security.

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- "But you can take what there is," I said.
- "On the contrary, I will accept nothing but minor sums—so to speak, the fractional shillings; though I confess I am always bewildered by silver," said he.

I questioned him upon his means of carrying on his expenditure. His answer was to refer to the pavement of the city of London. By paying here and there he had, he informed me, made a concrete for the wheels to roll on. He calculated that he now had credit for the space of three good years—ample time for him to fight his fight and win his victory.

"My tradesmen are not like the tradesmen of other persons," he broke out with a curious neigh of supreme satisfaction in that retinue. "They believe in me. I have de facto harnessed them to my fortunes; and if you doubt me on the point of success, I refer you to Dettermain and Newson. All I stipulate for is to maintain my position in society to throw a lustre on my Case. So much I must do. My failures hitherto have been entirely owing to the fact that I had not my son to stand by me."

- "Then you must have money, sir."
- "Yes, money."
- "Then what can you mean by refusing mine?"
- "I admit the necessity for it, my son. Say you hand me a cheque for a temporary thousand. Your credit and mine in conjunction can replace it before the expiration of the two months. Or," he meditated, "it might be better to give a bond or so to a professional

lender, and preserve the account at your bankers' intact. The truth is, I have, in my interview with the squire, drawn in advance upon the material success I have a perfect justification to anticipate, and I cannot allow the old gentleman to suppose that I retrench for the purpose of giving a large array of figures to your bankers' book. It would be sheer madness. I cannot do it. I cannot afford to do it. When you are on a runaway horse, -I prefer to say a racehorse,—Richie, you must ride him. You dare not throw up the reins. Only last night Wedderburn, appealing to Loftus, a practical sailor, was approved when he offered—I forget the subject-matter the illustration of a ship on a lee-shore; you are lost if you do not spread every inch of canvas to the gale. Retrenchment at this particular moment is perdition. Count our gains, Richie. We have won a princess . . ."

I called to him not to name her.

He persisted: "Half a minute. She is won; she is ours. And let me, in passing,—bear with me one second,—counsel you to write to Prince Ernest instanter, proposing formally for his daughter, and, in your grandfather's name, state her dowry at fifty thousand per annum."

"Oh, you forget!" I interjected.

"No, Richie, I do not forget that you are off a leeshore; you are mounted on a skittish racehorse, with, if you like, a New Forest fly operating within an inch of his belly-girths. Our situation is so far ticklish, and prompts invention and audacity."

- "You must forget, sir, that in the present state of the squire's mind, I should be simply lying in writing to the prince that he offers a dowry."
 - "No, for your grandfather has yielded consent."
 - "By implication, you know he withdraws it."
- "But if I satisfy him that you have not been extravagant?"
 - "I must wait till he is satisfied."
- "The thing is done, Richie, done. I see it in advance—it is done. Whatever befalls me, you, my dear boy, in the space of this two months, may grasp your fortune. Besides, here is my hand. I swear by it, my son, that I shall satisfy the squire. I go farther; I say I shall have the means to refund to you—the means, the money. The marriage is announced in our prints for the summer-say early June. And I undertake that you, the husband of the princess, shall be the first gentleman in England—that is, Europe. Oh! not ruling a coterie; not dazzling the world with entertainments." He thought himself in earnest when he said, "I attach no mighty importance to these things, though there is no harm I can perceive in leading the fashion -none that I see in having a consummate style. I know your taste, and hers, Richie, the noble lady's. She shall govern the intellectual world—your poets, your painters, your men of science. They reflect a beautiful sovereign mistress more exquisitely than almost aristocracy does. But you head our aristocracy also. You are a centre of the political world. So I

scheme it. Between you, I defy the Court to rival you. This I call distinction. It is no mean aim, by heaven! I protest, it is an aim with the mark in sight, and not out of range."

He whipped himself up to one of his oratorical frenzies, of which a cheque was the common fruit. The power of his persuasiveness in speech, backed by the spectacle of his social accomplishments, continued to subdue me, and I protested only inwardly even when I knew that he was gambling with fortune. I wrote out many cheques, and still it appeared to me that they were barely sufficient to meet the current expenses of his household. Temple and I calculated that his Grand Parade would try the income of a duke, and could but be a matter of months. Mention of it reached Riversley from various quarters, from Lady Maria Higginson, from Captain Bulsted and his wife, and from Sir Roderick Ilchester, who said to me, with fine accentuation, "I have met your father." Sir Roderick, an Englishman reputed of good breeding, informed the son that he had actually met the father in lofty society, at Viscountess Sedley's, at Lady Dolchester's, at Bramham DeWitt's, and heard of him as a frequenter of the Prussian and Austrian embassy entertainments; and also that he was admitted to the exclusive dinner-parties of the Countess de Strode, "which are," he observed, in the moderated tone of an astonishment devoting itself to propagation, "the cream of society." Indubitably, then, my father was no impostor: society proved it. The squire listened like one pelted by a storm, sure of his day to come at the close of the two months. gained his commendation by shunning the metropolitan balls, nor did my father press me to appear at them. It was tacitly understood between us that I should now and then support him at his dinner-table, and pass bowing among the most select of his great ladies. And this I did, and I felt at home with them, though I had to bear with roughnesses from one or two of the more venerable dames, which were not quite proper to good breeding. Old Lady Kane, great-aunt of the Marquis of Edbury, was particularly my tormentor, through her plain-spoken comments on my father's legal suit; for I had to listen to her without wincing, and agree in her general contempt of the Georges, and foil her queries coolly, when I should have liked to perform Jorian DeWitt's expressed wish to "squeeze the acid out of her in one grip, and toss her to the gods that collect exhausted lemons." She took extraordinary liberties with me.

"Why not marry an Englishwoman? Rich young men ought to choose wives from their own people, out of their own sets. Foreign women never get on well in this country, unless they join the hounds to hunt the husband."

She cited naturalized ladies famous for the pastime. Her world and its outskirts she knew thoroughly, even to the fact of my grandfather's desire that I should marry Janet Ilchester. She named a duke's daughter, an earl's. Of course I should have to stop the scandal:

otherwise the choice I had was unrestricted. My father she evidently disliked, but she just as much disliked an encounter with his invincible bonhomie and dexterous tongue. She hinted at family reasons for being shy of him, assuring me that I was not implicated in them. "The Guelph pattern was never much to my taste," she said, and it consoled me with the thought that he was not ranked as an adventurer in the houses he entered. I learned that he was supposed to depend chiefly on my vast resources. Edbury acted the part of informant to the inquisitive harridan: "Her poor dear good-fornothing Edbury! whose only cure would be a nice, well-conducted girl, an heiress." She had cast her eye on Anna Penrhys, but considered her antecedents doubtful. Spotless innocence was the sole receipt for Edbury's malady. My father, in a fit of bold irony, proposed Lady Kane for President of his Tattle and Scandal Club,—a club of ladies dotted with select gentlemen, the idea of which Jorian DeWitt claimed the merit of starting, and my father surrendered it to him, with the reservation that Jorian intended an association of backbiters pledged to reveal all they knew, whereas the club, in its present form, was an engine of morality and decency, and a social safeguard, as well as an amusement. It comprised a Committee of Investigation, and a Court of Appeal; its object was to arraign slander. Lady Kane declined the honour. "I am not a washerwoman," she said to me, and spoke of where dirty linen should be washed, and was distressingly

broad in her inuendoes concerning Edbury's stepmother. This club sat and became a terror for a month, adding something to my father's reputation. His inexhaustible conversational art and humour gave it such vitality as it had. Ladies of any age might apply for admission when well seconded: gentlemen under forty-five years were rigidly excluded, and the seniors must also have passed through the marriage ceremony. Outside tattle and scandal declared that the club was originated to serve as a tub for Lady Edbury, but I chose to have no opinion upon what I knew nothing of.

These matters were all ephemeral, and freaks; they produced, however, somewhat of the same effect on me as on my father, in persuading me that he was born for the sphere he occupied, and rendering me rather callous as to the sources of ways and means. I put my name to a bond for several thousand pounds, in conjunction with Lord Edbury, thinking my father right in wishing to keep my cheque book unworried, lest the squire should be seized with a spasm of curiosity before the two months were over. "I promise you I surprise him," my father said repeatedly. He did not say how: I had the suspicion that he did not know. His confidence and my growing recklessness acted in unison. Happily the newspapers were quiet. I hoped consequently to find peace at Riversley; but there the rumours of the Grand Parade were fabulous, thanks to Captain Bulsted and Julia, among others. These two again provoked an outbreak of rage from the squire, and I, after hearing them, was almost disposed to side with him; they suggested an inexplicable magnificence, and created an image of a man portentously endowed with the capacity to throw dust in the eyes. No description of the balls could have furnished me such an insight of their brilliancy as the consuming ardour they awakened in the captain and his wife. He reviewed them: "Princely entertainments! Arabian Nights!"

She built them up piecemeal: "The company! the dresses! the band! the supper!" The host was a personage supernatural. "Aladdin's magician, if you like," said Julia, "only—good! A perfect gentleman! and I'll say again, confound his enemies." She presumed, as she was aware she might do, upon the squire's prepossession in her favour, without reckoning that I was always the victim.

- "Heard o' that new story 'bout a Dauphin?" he asked.
- "A Dauphin?" quoth Captain Bulsted. "I don't know the fish."
- "You've been in a pretty kettle of 'em lately, William. I heard of it yesterday on the Bench. Lord Shale, our new Lord-Lieutenant, brought it down. A trick they played the fellow 'bout a Dauphin. Serve him right. You heard anything 'bout it, Harry?"

I had not.

- "But I tell ye there is a Dauphin mixed up with him. A Dauphin and Mr. Ik Dine!"
 - "Mr. Ik Dine!" exclaimed the captain, perplexed.

"Ay, that's German lingo, William, and you ought to know it if you're a loyal sailor — means 'I serve.'"

"Mr. Beltham," said the captain, seriously, "I give you my word of honour as a man and a British officer, I don't understand one syllable of what you're saying; but if it means any insinuation against the gentleman who condescends to extend his hospitalities to my wife and me, I must, with regret, quit the place where I have had the misfortune to hear it."

"You stop where you are, William," the squire motioned to him. "'Gad, I shall have to padlock my mouth, or I shan't have a friend left soon confounded fellow. I tell you they call him Mr. Ik Dine in town—Ik Deen, some say. That's the worst of a foreign language: no two people speak it alike. Ik Deen and a Dauphin! They made a regular clown and pantaloon o' the pair, I'm told. Couple o' pretenders to thrones invited to dine together and talk over their chances and show their private marks. Oho! by-and-by, William! You and I! Never a man made such a fool of in his life!"

The ladies retired. The squire continued, in a furious whisper:—

"They got the two together, William. 'Who are you?' 'I'm a Dauphin; who are you?' 'I'm Ik Dine, bar sinister.' 'Oh!' says the other, 'then I take precedence of you!' 'Devil a bit,' says the other; 'I've got more spots than you.' 'Proof,' says one.

'You first,' t'other. 'Count,' one cries. T'other sings out, 'Measles.' 'Better than a dying Dauphin,' roars t'other; and swore both of 'm 'twas nothing but portwine stains and pimples. Ha! ha! And, William, will you believe it?-the couple went round begging the company to count spots—ha! ha!—to prove their big birth! Oh, Lord, I'd ha' paid a penny to be there! A Jack o' Bedlam Ik Deen damned idiot!—makes name o' Richmond stink." (Captain Bulsted shot a wild stare round the room to make sure that the ladies had gone.) "I tell ve, William, I had it from Lord Shale himself only vesterday on the Bench. He brought it to us hot from town-didn't know I knew the fellow; says the fellow's charging and firing himself off all day and all night too-can't make him out. Says London's mad about him: lots o' women, the fools! Ha, ha! a Dauphin!"

"Ah, well, sir," Captain Bulsted supplicated feverishly, rubbing his brows and whiskers.

"It's true, William. Fellow ought to be taken up and committed as a common vagabond, and would be anywhere but in London. I'd jail him 'fore you cocked your eye twice. Fellow came here and talked me over to grant him a couple o' months to prove he hasn't swindled his son of every scrap of his money. We shall soon see. Not many weeks to run! And pretends—fellow swears to me—can get him into Parliament; swears he'll get him in 'fore the two months are over! An infernal—"

- "Please to recollect, sir; the old hereditary shall excuse you——"
 - "Gout, you mean, William? By--"
- "You are speaking in the presence of his son, sir, and you are trying the young gentleman's affection for you hard."
- "Eh? 'Cause I'm his friend? Harry," my grand-father faced round on me, "don't you know I'm the friend you can trust? Hal, did I ever borrow a farthing of you? Didn't I, the day of your majority, hand you the whole of your inheritance from your poor broken-hearted mother, with interest, and treat you like a man? And never played spy, never made an inquiry, till I heard the scamp had been fastening on you like a blood-sucker, and singing hymns into the ears of that squeamish dolt of a pipe-smoking parson, Peterborough—never thought of doing it! Am I the man that dragged your grandmother's name through the streets and soiled yours?"

I remarked that I was sensible of the debt of gratitude I owed to him, but would rather submit to the scourge, or to destitution, than listen to these attacks on my father.

"Cut yourself loose, Harry," he cried, a trifle mollified. "Don't season his stew—d'ye hear? Stick to decent people. Why, you don't expect he'll be locked up in the Tower for a finish, eh? It'll be Newgate, or the Bench. He and his Dauphin—ha! ha! A rascal crow and a Jack Dauphin!"

Captain Bulsted reached me his hand. "You have a great deal to bear, Harry. I commend you, my boy, for taking it manfully."

"I say no more," quoth the squire. "But what I said was true. The fellow gives his little dinners and suppers to his marchionesses, countesses, duchesses, and plays clown and pantaloon among the men. thinks a parcel o' broidered petticoats 'll float him. they may till a tradesman sent stark mad pops a pin into him. Harry, I'd as lief hang on to a fire-ship. Here's Ilchester tells me . . . and Ilchester speaks of him under his breath now as if he were sitting in a pew funking the parson. Confound the fellow! I say he's guilty of treason. Pooh! who cares! He cuts out the dandies of his day, does he? He's past sixty, if he's a It's all damned harlequinade. Let him twirl off one columbine or another, or a dozen, and then the last of him! Fellow makes the world look like a farce. He's got about eight feet by five to caper on, and all London gaping at him—geese! Are you a gentleman and a man of sense, Harry Richmond, to let yourself be lugged about in public-by the Lord! like a pair of street-tumblers in spangled haunch-bags, father and boy, on a patch of carpet, and a drum banging, and tossed and turned inside out, and my God! the ass of a fellow strutting the ring with you on his shoulder! That's the spectacle. And you, Harry, now I'll ask you, do you mean your wife-egad, it'd be a pretty scene, with your princess in hip-up petticoats, stiff as bottle-funnel top down'ards, airing a whole leg, and knuckling a tambourine!"

"Not crying, my dear lad?" Captain Bulsted put his arm round me kindly, and tried to catch a glimpse of my face. I let him see I was not going through that process. "Whew!" said he, "and enough to make any Christian sweat! You're in a bath, Harry. I wouldn't expect the man who murdered his godmother for one shilling and fivepence three-farthings the other day, to take such a slinging, and think he deserved it."

My power of endurance had reached its limit.

"You tell me, sir, you had this brutal story from the Lord-Lieutenant of the county?"

"Ay, from Lord Shale. But I won't have you going to him and betraying our connection with a---"

"Halloo!" Captain Bulsted sang out to his wife on the lawn. "And now, squire, I have had my dose. And you will permit me to observe that I find it emphatically what we used to call at school blackjack."

"And you were all the better for it afterwards, William."

"We did not arrive at that opinion, sir. Harry, your arm. An hour with the ladies will do us both good. The squire," he murmured, wiping his forehead as he went out, "has a knack of bringing us into close proximity with hell-fire when he pleases."

Julia screamed on beholding us, "Aren't you two men as pale as death!"

Janet came and looked.

"Merely a dose," said the captain. "We are anxious to play battledore and shuttlecock madly."

"So he shall, the dear!" Julia caressed him. "We'll all have a tournament in the wet-weather shed."

Janet whispered to me, "Was it—the Returning Thanks?"

"The what?" said I, with the dread at my heart of something worse than I had heard.

She hailed Julia to run and fetch the battledores, and then told me she had been obliged to confiscate the newspapers that morning and cast the burden on post-office negligence. "They reach grandada's hands by afternoon post, Harry, and he finds objectionable passages blotted or cut out; and as long as the scissors don't touch the business columns and the debates, he never asks me what I have been doing. He thinks I keep a scrap-book. I haven't often time in the morning to run an eye all over the paper. This morning it was the first thing I saw."

What had she seen? She led me out of view of the windows and showed me.

My father was accused of having stood up at a public dinner and returned thanks on behalf of an Estate of the Realm: it read monstrously. I ceased to think of the suffering inflicted on me by my grandfather.

Janet and I, side by side with the captain and Julia, carried on the game of battledore and shuttlecock, in a match to see whether the unmarried could keep the shuttle flying as long as the married with varying fortunes. She gazed on me, to give me the comfort of her sympathy, too much, and I was too intent on the vision of my father either persecuted by lies or guilty of hideous follies, to allow the match to be a fair one. So Julia could inform the squire that she and William had given the unmarried pair a handsome beating when he appeared peeping round one of the shed-pillars.

"Of course you beat 'em," said the squire. "It's not my girl's fault." He said more, to the old tune, which drove Janet away.

I remembered, when back in the London vortex, the curious soft beauty she won from casting up her eyes to watch the descending feathers, and the brilliant direct beam of those thick-browed, firm, clear eyes, with her frown, and her set lips and brave figure, when she was in the act of striking to keep up a regular quick fusillade. I had need of calm memories. The town was astir, and humming with one name.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MARQUIS OF EDBURY AND HIS PUPPET.

I PASSED from man to man, hearing hints and hesitations, alarming half-remarks, presumed to be addressed to one who could supply the remainder, and deduce There was a clearer atmosphere in the consequences. street of Clubs. Jennings was the first of my father's more intimate acquaintances to meet me frankly. spoke, though not with great seriousness, of the rumour of a possible prosecution. Sir Weeton Slater tripped up to us with a mixed air of solicitude and restraint, asked whether I was well, and whether I had seen the newspapers that morning; and on my informing him that I had just come up from Riversley, on account of certain rumours, advised me to remain in town strictly for the present. He also hinted at rumours of prosecu-"The fact is—" he began several times, rendered discreet, I suppose, by my juvenility, fierté, and reputed wealth. We were joined by Admiral Loftus and Lord Alton. They queried and counterqueried as to passages between my father and the newspapers, my VOL. II. 40

father and the committee of his club, preserving sufficient consideration for me to avoid the serious matter in all but distant allusions; a point upon which the breeding of Mr. Serjeant Wedderburn was not so accurate a guide to him. An exciting public scandal soon gathers knots of gossips in Clubland. We saw Wedderburn break from a group some way down the pavement and pick up a fresh crumb of amusement at one of the doorsteps. "Roy Richmond is having his benefit to-day!" he said, and repeated this and that, half audible to me. For the rest, he pooh-poohed the idea of the Law intervening. His "How d'ye do, Mr. Richmond, how d'ye do?" was almost congratulatory. "I think we meet at your father's table to-night? It won't be in the Tower, take my word for it. Oh! the papers! There's no Act to compel a man to deny what appears in the papers. No such luck as the Tower!-though Littlepitt (Mr. Wedderburn's nickname for our Premier) would be fool enough for that. He would. If he could turn attention from his Bill, he'd do it. We should have to dine off Boleyn's block:—coquite horum obsonia, he'd say, eh?" Jennings espied my father's carriage, and stepped to speak a word to the footman. He returned, saying, with a puff of his cheeks: "The Grand Monarque has been sending his state equipage to give the old backbiting cripple Brisby an airing. He is for horse exercise to-day: they've dropped him in Courtenay Square. There goes Brisby. He'd take the good Samaritan's shilling to buy a flask of poison for him. He'll use

Roy's carriage to fetch and carry for that venomous old woman Kane, I'll swear."

"She's a male in Scripture," said Wedderburn, and this reminded him of an anecdote that reminded him of another, and after telling them, he handed round his hat for the laugh, as my father would have phrased it. "Has her ladyship declared war?" Sir Weeton Slater inquired.

"No, that's not her preliminary towards waging it," Wedderburn replied. These high-pressure smart talkers had a moment of dulness, and he bethought him that he must run into the Club for letters, and was busy at Westminster, where, if anything fresh occurred between meridian and six o'clock, he should be glad, he said, to have word of it by messenger, that he might not be behind his age.

The form of humour to express the speed of the world was common, but it struck me as a terrible illustration of my father's. I had still a sense of pleasure in the thought that these intimates of his were gentlemen who relished and, perhaps, really liked him. They were not parasites; not the kind of men found hanging about vulgar profligates.

I quitted them. Sir Weeton Slater walked half-adozen steps beside me. "May I presume on a friendly acquaintance with your father, Mr. Richmond?" he said. "The fact is—you will not be offended?—he is apt to lose his head, unless the Committee of Supply limits him very precisely. I am aware that there is no

material necessity for any restriction." He nodded to me as to one of the marvellously endowed, as who should say, The Gods presided at your birth. The worthy baronet struggled to impart his meaning, which was, that he would have had me define something like an allowance to my father, not so much for the purpose of curtailing his expenditure—he did not venture upon private ground—as to bridle my father's ideas of things possible for a private gentleman in this country. that character none were like him. As to his suit, or appeal, he could assure me that Serjeant Wedderburn, and all who would or could speak on the subject, saw no prospect of success; not any. The worst of it was, that it caused my father to commit himself in sundry ways. It gave a handle to his enemies. It——he glanced at me indicatively.

I thanked the well-meaning gentleman without encouraging him to continue.

"It led him to perform once more as a Statue of Bronze before the whole of gaping London!" I could have added. That scene on the pine-promontory arose in my vision, followed by other scenes of the happy German days. I had no power to conjure up the princess.

Jorian DeWitt was the man I wanted to see. After applications at his Club and lodgings I found him dragging his burgundy leg in the Park, on his road to pay a morning visit to his fair French enchantress. I impeached him, and he pleaded guilty, clearly not wishing

to take me with him, nor would he give me Mdlle. Jenny's address, which I had. By virtue of the threat that I would accompany him if he did not satisfy me, I managed to extract the story of the Dauphin, aghast at the discovery of its being true. The fatal after-dinner speech he believed to have been actually spoken, and he touched on that first. "A trap was laid for him, Harry Richmond: and a deuced clever trap it was. They smuggled in special reporters. There wastn't a bit of necessity for the toast. But the old vixen has shown her hand, so now he must fight. He can beat her single-handed on settees. He'll find her a Tartar at long bowls: she sticks at nothing. She blazes out that he scandalizes her family. She has a dozen indictments against him. You must stop in town and keep watch. There's fire in my leg to explode a powder-magazine a mile off!"

"Is it the Margravine of Rippau?" I inquired. I could think of no other waspish old woman.

"Lady Kane," said Jorian. "She set Edbury on to face him with the Dauphin. You don't fancy it came of the young dog 'all of himself,' do you? Why, it was clever! He trots about a briefless little barrister, a scribbler, devilish clever and impudent, who does his farces for him. Tenby's the fellow's name, and it's the only thing I haven't heard him pun on. Puns are the smallpox of the language!—we're cursed with an epidemic. By gad, the next time I meet him I'll roar out for vaccine matter."

310 THE ADVENTURES OF HARRY RICHMOND.

He described the dinner given by Edbury at a celebrated City tavern where my father and this so-called Dauphin were brought together. "Dinner to-night," he nodded, as he limped away on his blissful visit of ceremony to sprightly Chassediane (a bouquet had gone in advance): he left me stupefied. The sense of ridicule enveloped me in suffocating folds, howling sentences of the squire's Bœotian burlesque by fits. I felt that I could not but take the world's part against the man who allowed himself to be made preposterous externally, when I knew him to be staking his frail chances and my fortune with such rashness. It was unpardonable for one in his position to incur ridicule. Nothing but a sense of duty kept me from rushing out of London. and I might have indulged the impulse advantageously. Delay threw me into the clutches of Lady Kane herself, on whom I looked with as composed a visage as I could command, while she leaned out of her carriage chattering at me, and sometimes over my head to passing gentle-She wanted me to take a seat beside her, she had so much to say. Was there not some funny story abroad of a Pretender to the Throne of France? she asked, wrinkling her crow's-feet evelids to peer at me. and wished to have the particulars. I had none to offer. "Ah! well," said she; "you stay in London? Come and see me. I'm sure you're sensible. You and I can put our heads together. He's too often in Courtenay Square, and he's ten years too young for that, still. He ought to have good advice. Tell me, how can a woman who can't guide herself help a man?—and the most difficult man alive! I'm sure you understand me. I can't drive out in the afternoon for them. They make a crush here, and a clatter of tongues!... That's my private grievance. But he's now keeping persons away who have the first social claim ... I know they can't appear. Don't look confused; no one accuses you. Only I do say it's getting terribly hot in London for somebody. Call on me? Will you?"

She named her hours. I bowed as soon as I perceived my opportunity. Her allusions were to Lady Edbury, and to imputed usurpations of my father's. walked down to the chambers where Temple was reading Law, for a refuge from these annoyances. I was in love with the modest shadowed life Temple lived, diligently reading, and glancing on the world as through a dusky window, happy to let it run its course while he sharpened his weapons. A look at Temple's face told me he had heard quite as much as was known in the West. Dininghalls of lawyers are not Cistercian; he was able to give me three distinct versions of the story of the Dauphin. No one could be friendlier. Indeed Temple now urged me forcibly to prevent my father from spending money and wearing his heart out in vain, by stopping the case in Dettermain and Newson's hands. They were respectable lawyers, he said, in a lawyer's ordinary tone when including such of his species as are not black sheep. He thought it possible that my father's personal influence overbore their judgment. In fact, nothing bound them to refuse to work for him, and he believed that they had submitted their views for his consideration. "I do wish he'd throw it up;" Temple exclaimed. "It makes him enemies. And just examining it, you see he could get no earthly good out of it: he might as well try to scale a perpendicular rock. But when I'm with him, I'm ready to fancy what he pleases-I acknowledge that. He has excess of phosphorus, or he's ultra-electrical; doctors could tell us better than lawyers." Temple spoke of the clever young barrister Tenby as the man whom his father had heard laughing over the trick played upon "Roy Richmond." I conceived that I might furnish Mr. Tenby a livelier kind of amusement, and the thought that I had once been sur le terrain, and had bitterly regretted it, by no means deterred me from the idea of a second expedition, so black was my mood. A review of the circumstances, aided by what reached my ears before the night went over, convinced me that Edbury was my man. subordinate helped him to the instrument, and possibly to the plot, but Edbury was the capital offender. The scene of the prank was not in itself so bad as the stuff which a cunning anecdotalist could make out of it. Edbury invited my father to a dinner at a celebrated City tavern. He kept his guests (Jennings, Jorian DeWitt, Alton, Wedderburn, were among the few I was acquainted with who were present) awaiting the arrival of a person for whom he professed extraordinary respect. The Dauphin of France was announced. A mild,

flabby, amiable-looking old person, with shelving forehead and grey locks-excellently built for the object, Jorian said-entered. The Capet head and embonpoint were there. As far as a personal resemblance might go, his pretentions to be the long-lost Dauphin were grotesquely convincing, for, notwithstanding the accurate picture of the Family presented by him, the man was a pattern bourgeois:—a sturdy impostor, one would have thought, and I thought so when I heard of him: but I have been assured that he had actually grown old in the delusion that he, carrying on his business in the City of London, was the identical Dauphin. Edbury played his part by leading his poor old victim half way to meet his other most honoured guest, hesitating then and craving counsel whether he was right in etiquette to advance the Dauphin so far. The Dauphin left him mildly to decide the point: he was eminently mild throughout, and seems to have thought himself in good faith surrounded by believers and adherents. task soon grew too delicate for that coarse boy. father's dexterous hands he at once lost his assumption of the gallantry of manner which could alone help him to retain his advantage. When the wine was in him he began to bawl. I could imagine the sort of dialogue he raised. Bets on the Dauphin, bets on Roy: they were matched as on a racecourse. The Dauphin remembered incidents of his residence in the Temple, with a beautiful juvenile faintness; a conscientious angling for recollection, Wedderburn said. Roy was requested to remember something, to drink and refresh his memory: infantine incidents were suggested. He fenced the treacherous host during dinner with superb complacency. The Dauphin was of an immoveable composure. He "stated simple facts: he was the Dauphin of France, providentially rescued from the Temple in the days of the Terror." For this deliverance, somewhat to the consternation of the others, he offered up a short prayer of thanksgiving over his plate. He had, he said, encountered incredulity. He had his proofs. He who had never been on the soil of France since early boyhood, spoke French with a pure accent: he had the physical and moral constitution of the Family: owing to events attending his infant days, he was timid. Jorian imitated him:-"I start at the opening of a door; I see dark faces in my sleep: it is a dungeon; I am at the knees of my Unfortunate Royal Father, with my Beautiful Mother." His French was quaint, but not absurd. He became loquacious, apostrophizing vacancy with uplifted hand and eye. The unwonted invitation to the society of noblemen made him conceive his Dauphinship to be on the high road to a recognition in England, and he was persuaded to drink and exhibit proofs: which were that he had the constitution of the Family, as aforesaid. in every particular; that he was peculiarly marked with testificatory spots; and that his mere aspect inspired all members and branch members of the Family with awe and stupefaction. One of the latter,

hearing of him, had appointed to meet him in a pastrycook's shop. He met him, and left the place with a cloud on his brow, showing tokens of respectful sympathy. Conceive a monomaniacal obese old English citizen, given to lift hand and eye and address the cornices, claiming to be an Illustrious Boy, and calling on a beautiful historic mother and unfortunate Royal sire to attest it! No wonder the table was shaken with laughter. He appealed to Tenby constantly, as to the one man he knew in the room. Tenby it was who made the discovery of him somewhere in the City. where he earned his livelihood either as a corn-merchant, or a stockbroker, or a chronometer-maker, or a drysalter, and was always willing to gratify a customer with the sight of his proofs of identity. Mr. Tenby made it his business to push his clamorous waggishness for the exhibition. I could readily believe that my father was more than his match in disposable sallies and weight of humour, and that he shielded the old creature successfully, so long as he had a tractable being to protect. But the Dauphin was plied with wine, and the marquis had his fun. Proof upon proof in verification of his claims was proffered by the now tremulous son of St. Louis—so he called himself. With, Jorian admitted, a real courtly dignity, he stood up and proposed to lead the way to any neighbouring cabinet to show the spots on his person; living witnesses to the truth of his allegations, he declared them to be. The squire had authority for his broad farce,

except in so far as he mixed up my father in the swinery of it. I grew more and more convinced that my father never could have lost his presence of mind when he found himself in the net of a plot to cover him with ridicule. He was the only one who did not retire to the Dauphin's 'chamber of testification,' to return convulsed with vinous laughter after gravely inspecting the evidence; for which abstention the Dauphin reproached him violently, in round terms of abuse, challenging him to go through a similar process. This was the signal for Edbury, Tenby, and some of They formed a circle, one half for the the rest. Dauphin, one for Roy. How long the boorish fun lasted, and what exactly came of it, I did not hear. Jorian DeWitt said my father lost his temper, a point contested by Wedderburn and Jennings, for it was unknown of him. Anyhow, he thundered to some effect, inasmuch as he detached those that had gentlemanly feelings from the wanton roysterers, and next day the latter pleaded wine. But they told the story, not without embellishments. The world followed their example.

I dined and slept at Temple's house, not caring to meet my incarnate humiliation. I sent to hear that he was safe. A quiet evening with a scholarly man, and a man of strong practical ability and shrewdness, like Mr. Temple, did me good. I wished my father and I were on the same footing as he and his son, and I may add his daughters. They all talked sensibly;

they were at feud with nobody; they reflected their condition. It was a simple orderly English household, of which the father was the pillar, the girls the ornaments, the son the hope, growing to take his father's place. My envy of such a home was acute, and I thought of Janet, and how well she was fashioned to build one resembling it, if only the mate allotted to her should not be a fantastical dreamer. Temple's character seemed to me to demand a wife like Janet on its merits: an idea that depressed me exceedingly. I had introduced Temple to Anna Penrhys, who was very kind to him; but these two were not framed to be other than friends. Janet, on the contrary, might some day perceive the sterling fellow Temple was, notwithstanding his moderate height. She might, I thought. I remembered that I had once wished that she would, and I was amazed at myself. But why? She was a girl sure to marry. I brushed these meditations away. Thev recurred all the time I was in Temple's house.

Mr. Temple waited for my invitation to touch on my father's case, when he distinctly pronounced his opinion that it could end but in failure. Though a strict Constitutionalist, he had words of disgust for princes, acknowledging, however, that we were not practical in our use of them, and kept them for political purposes often to the perversion of our social laws and their natural dispositions. He spoke of his son's freak in joining the navy. "That was the princess's doing," said Temple. She talked of our naval heroes, till she

made me feel I had only to wear the anchor-buttons to be one myself. Don't tell her I was invalided from the service, Richie, for the truth is, I believe, I half shammed. And the time won't be lost. You'll see I shall extract guineas from 'old ocean' like salt. Precious few barristers understand maritime cases. The other day I was in Court, and prompted a great Q.C. in a case of collision. Didn't I, sir?"

"I think there was a hoarse whisper audible up to the judge's seat at intervals," said Mr. Temple.

"The Bar cannot confess to obligations from those who don't wear the robe," Temple rejoined.

His father advised me to read for the Bar, as a piece of very good training.

I appealed to Temple whether he thought it possible to read law-books in a cockboat in a gale of wind.

Temple grimaced and his father nodded. Still it struck me that I might one day have the felicity of quiet hours to sit down with Temple and read law—far behind him in the race. And he envied me, in his friendly manner, I knew. My ambition had been blown to tatters.

A new day dawned. The household rose and met at the breakfast-table, devoid of any dread of the morning newspapers. Their talk was like the chirrup of birds. Temple and his father walked away together to chambers, bent upon actual business—upon doing something! I reflected emphatically, and compared them to ships with rudders, while I was at the mercy of

wind, tide, and wave. I called at Dettermain and Newson's, and heard there of a discovery of a witness essential to the case, either in North Wales or in New I did not, as I had intended, put a veto on their proceedings. The thing to do was to see my father, and cut the case at the fountain head. For this purpose it was imperative that I should go to him, and prepare myself for the interview by looking at the newspapers first. I bought one, hastily running my eyes down the columns in the shop. His name was printed, but merely in a fashionable notification that carriages took up and set down for his costume ball according to certain regulations. The relief of comparative obscurity helped me to breathe freely: not to be laughed at, was a gain. I was rather inclined to laud his courage in entering assembly-rooms, where he must be aware that he would see the Dauphin on every face. Perhaps he was guilty of some new extravagance last night, too late for scandal to reinforce the reporters?

Mrs. Waddy had a woeful visage when informing me that he was out, gone to Courtenay Square. ventured a murmur of bills coming in. Like everybody else, she fancied he drew his supplies from my inexhaustible purse; she hoped the bills would be paid off immediately: the servants' wages were overdue. "Never can I get him to attend to small accounts," she whimpered, and was so ready to cry outright, that I said, "Tush," and with the one word gave her comfort. "Of course, you, Mr. Harry, can settle them, I know that." We were drawing near to poor old Sewis's legacy, even for the settling of the small accounts!

London is a narrow place to one not caring to be seen. I could not remain in this creditor-riddled house; I shunned the parks, the clubs, and the broad, brighter streets of the West. Musing on the refreshing change it would be to me to find myself suddenly on board Captain Jasper Welsh's barque Priscilla, borne away to strange climes and tongues, the world before me, I put on the striding pace which does not invite interruption, and no one but Edbury would have taken the liberty. I heard his shout. "Halloa! Richmond." He was driving his friend Witlington in his cabriolet. "Richmond, my hearty, where the deuce have you been? I wanted you to dine with me the other night."

I replied, looking at him steadily, that I wished I had been there.

"Compendious larks!" cried he, in the slang of his dog's day. "I say; you're one at Duke Fitz's masquerade to-night? Tell us your toggery. Hang it, you might go for the Black Prince. I'm Prince Hal. Got a headache? Come to my club and try my mixture. Yoicks! it'd make Methuselah and Melchisedec jump up and have a twirl and a fandango. I say, you're thick with that little French actress Chastedian—jolly little woman! too much to say for herself to suit me."

He described the style of woman that delighted him
—an ideal English shepherdess of the print-shops, it
appeared, and of extremely remote interest to me, I

thought at the time. Eventually I appointed to walk round to his club, and he touched his horse gently, and bobbed his diminutive henchman behind his smart cabriolet, the admiration of the street.

I found him waiting for me on the steps of his club, puffing a cigar with all his vigour, in the classic attitude of a trumpeter. My first words were: "I think I have to accuse you of insulting me."

"Insulting you, Richmond!" he cried, much surprised, holding his cigar in transit.

"If you insult my father, I make you responsible to me."

"Insult old Duke Fitz! I give you my word of honour, Richmond—why, I like him; I like the old boy. Wouldn't hurt him for the world and all Havannah. What the deuce have you got into your head? Come in and smoke."

The mention of his dinner and the Dauphin crazed him with laughter. He begged me as a man to imagine the scene: the old Bloated Bourbon of London Wall and Camberwell! an Illustrious Boy!—drank like a fish!—ready to show himself to the waiters! And then with "Gee" and "Gaw," the marquis spouted out reminiscences of scene, the best ever witnessed! "Up starts the Dauphin. 'Damn you, sir! and damn me, sir, if I believe you have a spot on your whole body!' And snuffles and puffs—you should have been there, Richmond. I wrote to ask you: did upon my life! I wanted you there. Lord! why, you won't get such fun

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in a century. And old Roy! he behaved uncommonly finely; said capital things, by Jove! Never saw him shine so; old trump! Says Dauphin, 'My beautiful mother had a longing for strawberries out of season. I am marked with a strawberry, here.' Says Roy: 'It is an admirable and roomy site, but as I am not your enemy, sir, I doubt if I shall often have the opportunity to behold it.' Ha! ha!—gee! Richmond, you've missed the deucedest good scene ever acted."

How could I, after having had an adversary like Prince Otto, call upon a fellow such as Edbury to give me reason for his conduct? He rollicked and laughed until my ungovernable impatience brought him to his senses.

"Dash it, you're a fire-eater I know, Richmond. We can't fight in this country; ain't allowed. And fighting's infernal folly. By Jove! if you're going to tumble down every man who enjoys old Roy, you've your work cut out for you. He's long chalks the best joke out. 'Twixt you and me, he did return thanks. What does it matter what old Duke Fitz does? I give him a lift on his ladder with all my heart. He keeps a capital table. And I'll be hanged if he hasn't got the secret of the women. How he does it-old Rov! If the lords were ladies they'd vote him premier peer, double quick. And I'll tell you what, Richmond, I'm thought a devil of a good-tempered fellow for not keeping watch over Courtenay Square. I don't call it my business to be house-dog for a pretty stepmother. But there's talking and nodding, and oh! leave all that:

come in and smoke, and let me set you up; and I'll shake your hand. Halloa! I'm hailed."

A lady, grasping the veil across her face, beckoned her hand from a closed carriage below. Edbury ran down to her. I caught sight of ravishing golden locks, reminding me of Mabel Sweetwinter's hair, and pricking me with a sensation of spite at the sex for their deplorable madness in the choice of favourites. Edbury called me to come to the carriage-window. I moved slowly. but the carriage wheeled about and rolled away. I could just see the outline of a head muffled in furs and lace.

"Queer fish, women!" he delivered himself of the philosophical ejaculation cloudily. I was not on terms with him to offer any remark upon the one in question. His imperturbable good humour foiled me, and I left him, merely giving him a warning, to which his answer was: "Oh! come in and have a bottle of claret."

Claret or brandy had done its work on him by the time I encountered him some hours later, in the Park. Bramham DeWitt, whom I met in the same neighbourhood, offered me a mount after lunch, advising me to keep near my father as much as I conveniently could; and he being sure to appear in the Park, I went, and heard his name to the right and left of me. He was now, as he said to me once that he should become, "the tongue of London." I could hardly expect to escape from curious scrutiny myself; I was looked at. Here and there I had to lift my hat and bow. The

stultification of one's feelings and ideas in circumstances which divide and set them at variance is worse than positive pain. The looks shed on me were rather flattering, but I knew that in the background I was felt to be the son of the notorious. Edbury came trotting up to us like a shaken sack, calling, "Heigh! any of you seen old Roy?" Bramham DeWitt, a stiff, fashionable man of fifty, proud of his blood and quick as his cousin Jorian to resent an impertinence, replied: "Are you the Marquis of Edbury, or a drunken groom, sir?"

"'Gad, old gentleman, I've half a mind to ride you down," said Edbury, and, espying me, challenged me to a race to run down the fogies.

A cavalcade of six abreast came cantering along. I saw my father listen to a word from Lady Edbury, and push his horse to intercept the marquis. They spoke. "Presently, presently," my father said; "ride to the rear, and keep at half a stone's throw—say, a groom's distance."

"Groom be hanged!" Edbury retorted. "I made a bet I'd drive you out of the Park, old Roy!"

"Ride behind then," said my father, and to my astonishment Edbury obeyed him, with laughter. Lady Edbury smiled to herself; and I experienced the esteem I perceived in her for a masterful manner. A few minutes later my father beckoned me to pay my respects to Graf Kesensky, an ambassador with strong English predilections and some influence among us. He asked

me if he was right in supposing I wished to enter Parliament. I said he was, wondering at the interest a foreigner could find in it. The count stopped a quietpacing gentleman. Bramham DeWitt joined them, and a group of friends. I was introduced to Mr. Beauchamp Hill, the Government whip, who begged me to call on him with reference to the candidature of a Sussex borough: "that is," said he turning to Graf Kesensky, "if you're sure the place is open? I've heard nothing of Falmouth's accident." The count replied that Falmouth was his intimate friend; he had received a special report that Falmouth was dying, just as he was on the point of mounting his horse. shan't have lost time," said Mr. Hill. The Government wanted votes. I went down to the House of Commons at midnight to see him. He had then heard of Falmouth's hopeless condition, and after extracting my political views, which were for the nonce those of a happy subserviency, he expressed his belief that the new writ for the borough of Chippenden might be out, and myself seated on the Government benches, within a very short period. Nor would it be necessary, he thought, for the Government nominee to spend money: "though that does not affect you, Mr. Richmond!" My supposititious wealth gave me currency even in political circles.

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